Critical Perspectives on Local Governance: The Formation of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in Low-Income Immigrant Neighborhoods of Los Angeles

by

Wonhyung Lee

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Urban and Regional Planning)
in the University of Michigan
2014

Doctoral Committee:

Associate Professor Joseph D. Grengs, Chair
Assistant Professor David S. Bieri
Professor Jorge Delva
Associate Professor Gavin M. Shatkin, Northeastern University

Acknowledgements

As I approach the end of my graduate studies, I want to give special thanks to the people and institutions that supported the research and writing of this dissertation. As this research is largely based on a year-long field work in Los Angeles, I am truly grateful to the community stakeholders, city officials, and other experts who responded warmly to a stranger who came all the way from Michigan and shared a valuable perspective about communities and business improvement districts (BIDs) in Los Angeles. I also thank the UCLA library which greatly benefited my research while I was away from Michigan. Financially, *Rackham Graduate School* and *Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy* at the University of Michigan supported part of my fieldwork. While my fieldwork entailed exciting moments of learning, there were many moments of solitude and fatigue. Through those difficult times, I had wonderful mentors and friends who helped me make Los Angeles closer to home. My special thanks go to Professor Zeke Hasenfeld at UCLA and my dear friends, Sue Jong, Kris, Daniel, Shanna, the Nanfelts, the Browns, the Grabaus, the Genzink and Lopez, two Megans, Kelly, Patrick, and Daisy. Their kindness and encouragement made my time in Los Angeles a special segment in my graduate studies.

My research and dissertation writing would have not been completed without the phenomenal Committee members who encouraged me to keep forging ahead over the past several years. I cannot express enough thanks to Professor Joe Grengs who guided each step of my research and dissertation writing with clarity and warmth. Joe's wisdom and compassion saved me from large and small hurdles and helped me to persevere and finish strong. I thank

Professor Gavin Shatkin who patiently waited for my ideas to brew during my proposal writing. Despite the physical distance afterwards, Gavin has shown steadfast support for me to grow in academic identity and confidence. Professor David Bieri brought bright and fun perspectives on research and life. I much appreciate David's time and advice that he shares with young scholars. Last but not least, I thank Professor Jorge Delva who has been a wonderful mentor and an advocate over the last several years. Jorge has led his mentees with a caring and down-to-earth manner; his positive energy and timely advice carried me forward up to where I am now.

I also have received tremendous support from the Department. I thank Professor Scott Campbell who has been a consistent supporter of doctoral students. Scott's office was always wide open for me to share my ideas and questions, and his presence and intellectual guidance helped me not only to strengthen the theoretical framework of this dissertation, but also to achieve meaningful milestones during graduate school. Professors Martin Murray, June Thomas, Lan Deng, and Jonathan Levine spared no effort to help me improve my dissertation proposal. I also thank Lisa Hauser without whom I would have never been able to navigate through a labyrinth of administrative procedures and policies. I thank Professors Larissa Larsen and Dick Norton for guiding the doctoral program in a way that strongly motivated me to reach my annual goals and move forward to the next step. I deeply cherish the constructive companionship that I shared with colleagues and former office-mates, including Nick Rajkovich, Nghi-Dung Nguyen-Phuoc, Kate Owens, Matt Weber, Tom Skuzinski, Eric Seymour, David Epstein, Neha Sami, Shohei Nakamura, and Faiza Moatasim.

I would also like to express my deep gratitude to my mentors from outside the Department. I have been blessed to meet wonderful mentors in the School of Social Work, who inspired me to pursue community-based research and practice. Especially, I consulted with Professors Michael Spencer, Andrew Grogan-Kaylor, and Eve Garrow about research directions, methods, and implications. I would also like to thank Ray McDaniel and Elizabeth Hildinger who spent numerous hours on developing my research ideas, improving clarity in my thoughts, and helping me grow in my writing.

Finally, I would like to thank close friends and family who have shared unconditional love and nurturing perspectives throughout the long journey. I have been blessed to have fun study mates, Sammy, Bhargav, Tak, Chun, Shao-Yuan, Fernando, Hyunjee, and Yoonsun. My small group has enriched my body and soul every week; I express special thanks to the Raymonds, the Gadways, the Richardsons, the Courts, and the Eaton family. My cousins, the Kim and Kevorkian family, have been cheerleading all the way from the West Coast for many years. Kathy Daly, a mom-ish cousin and a great English teacher, has always filled my heart with positive energy that made me revive and embrace life with gratitude. My partner, Victor, has shown bottomless support and encouragement for me to endure tough times and rejoice in the journey. I send my love and gratitude to my parents and sister, the anchors of my life, who have been with me every single day in spirit no matter how remote they are. Lastly, I thank God who gave me the ability to think and has led me all the way with love and faithfulness.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures

List of Tables

Abstract

Business improvement districts (BIDs) are local organizations funded by private businesses that have been revitalizing commercial areas for the last two decades in the United States. While local governments are cutting back on the delivery of services, local stakeholders such as property owners and business owners are assuming new roles by providing private services aimed at improving commercial landscapes. The emergence of BIDs represents the growing importance of sublocal governing structures for local development and revitalization. However, not every commercial district succeeds in establishing BIDs despite their interest and need. This research aims to understand why certain neighborhoods fail to form BIDs and what factors could facilitate successful formation of BIDs in the context of low-income multiethnic neighborhoods in which BIDs can function as an effective economic and community development tool. This research presents a comparative examination of two commercial districts in Los Angeles—MacArthur Park and the Byzantine Latino Quarter (BLQ)—that share similar demographic characteristics but have yielded different BID formation outcomes. This research involved collecting archival data, observations, and in-depth interviews during a year-long field research in Los Angeles. Major groups of interviewees include property owners, community organization staff, city employees, and private consultants involved in the BID formation process. The comparison of the two neighborhoods revealed common challenges for BID formation that are related to a high percentage of absentee property owners, spatial tensions and information gaps among multiethnic groups, and low human and financial capital. Despite these challenges, the

BLQ displayed distinguishable factors that may have contributed to successful BID formation, including invested and persistent community stakeholders, partnerships with non- and quasi-governmental organizations, sound foundation of residents' activism, and efforts to embrace multi-ethnic groups in the neighborhood. The findings of this study offer insights for understanding the kind of struggle that low-income immigrant neighborhoods usually experience in BID formation, for broadening the current theoretical and empirical understandings of multicultural community organizing, and for guiding a more equitable distribution of public services and resources for the areas with inconclusive or ineffective efforts for BID formation.

Chapter 1

The Rise of Sublocal Structures in Urban Governance

During the last few years, the Los Angeles city government has conspicuously struggled to provide public services. In the void thereby created, there is an increasing need for neighborhood-oriented initiatives and market-oriented solutions to provide basic services such as trash and graffiti removal. Local organizations such as business improvement districts (BIDs) have emerged to address the gap in services. In this chapter, I first describe the rising trend of sublocal governance structures. I then narrow the scope to one particular type of the sublocal governance structure (i.e., BIDs) and provide background knowledge of BIDs and the history of BID formation in Los Angeles to provide the local context for this study. Lastly, I discuss potential problems with the fragmented local governance and relative struggles that marginalized neighborhoods may face to create BIDs. Chapter 1 will introduce the background of the research question by discussing the currently fragmented ownership of trash removal services in downtown Los Angeles. I will describe the role of diverse entities in managing and maintaining the sanitation and physical condition of streets.

1.1 From Government to Governance

Contemporary city management reflects the diminished role of government over the last few decades. In the 1970s, the federal government was dealing with unemployment, inflation, and a stagnant economy while adjusting to post-industrialism and global competition. Under such

pressures, the United States government that was once actively engaged in social service delivery during the Depression and the two world wars had to reconsider its role. The central government, steadily moved to the right due to working-class resentment and sentiment against big government, started distancing itself from the need and problems of local communities (O'Connor, 1999). The Reagan and Bush administrations also made great efforts to reduce the size of government by cutting back federal tax and regulation throughout the 1980s. The result of these policy changes were localism, fiscal austerity, and privatization, which compromised public services and urban programs in poor communities (Eisinger, 1998; Erie, Kogan, & MacKenzie, 2010; Fraser & Kick, 2005).

One of the major outcomes of the declining municipal capacity and responsibility for public works was a niche for the growth of sublocal[1] capacity to govern matters autonomously. According to Briffault (1997), a leading scholar who offers critical perspectives on the changes in the structure and power of local governance, sublocal structures tend to rise in big cities where and when the local government system is less likely to provide adequate benefits to every corner of the city. In big cities, localities tend to experience inadequate attention and delivery of services from the municipal government. The rise of submunicipal political institutions is an attempt to respond to this problem by decentralizing and diversifying the service delivery. The sublocal governance structures satisfy the needs and preferences of sublocal stakeholders while still maintaining the position of big cities in the local government system. As a result, sublocal governance gives rise to greater territorial variance within large cities and diverse policies at neighborhood levels. Sublocal structures operate autonomously to provide for customized taxation, services, or regulation to designated zones/districts to designated territories. Examples

[1] I use the term *sublocal* because the geographical area of governance addressed in this study is smaller than the area under local municipal government.

of such new forms of institutions include enterprise zones, tax increment finance districts, special zoning districts, and business improvement districts (Briffault, 1997).

The rise of sublocal structures theoretically parallels the emergence of new actors in local governance. The complexity of contemporary society creates challenges for the central government to govern without the cooperation of other actors (Kooiman, 2003; Stoker, 1998; Taylor, 2007). The concept of governance therefore emerged to capture the new ways communities, cities, and regions manage power and policy as an alternative to conventional top-down government control. The major characteristic that differentiates governance from government is that governance accentuates processes, networks, and partnerships whereby diverse actors negotiate and make decisions (Atkinson, 2003; Stoker, 1998). In sum, the empirical and theoretical ground for the rise of sublocal structures suggests two important changes in local governance: first, government's role has turned away from actively providing direct services ("rowing") to guiding directions and resources for communities to solve their own problems ("steering") (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992; Savas, 1987); and second, the more privatized, entrepreneurial, and catalytic role of government has created spaces for new actors to participate in the local policy process (Taylor, 2007).

Los Angeles offers an excellent case to examine the development of municipal failure and the growth of participation of non-governmental actors in depth. The trajectory of Los Angeles in the last few decades accounts for the growing gap between the municipal capacity and the demands of the city's population. As the second-most populous city in the United States, Los Angeles has always been a growing city with a marked increased in the last few decades from a population of 2.96 million in 1970 to 3.79 million in 2010. However, the city revenue has not grown at an adequate rate to meet the needs of the increased population. Severe inflation

during the 1970s and subsequently escalated tax bills instigated the adoption by the State of California of Proposition 13, "the mother of all modern state tax revolts" (Cain, 2009), which since 1978 has limited property taxes to a very low rate (Sears & Citrin, 1982) and has forced Los Angeles to compete with other cities in search of retail tax revenue (Sonenshein, 2006). The restricted tax, coupled with the 1982 recession, placed intense fiscal pressure on the city government. In addition, the city's demographic transition has added to its fiscal stress. During this time the white population rapidly left the city and families with school-aged children declined at even greater rates (Schneider, 2008). The percentage of white population decreased from 78 percent to 54 percent in Los Angeles between 1960 and 1980, which led to moderate sluggish growth in per capita income and the crisis of public schools (Storper, 2013). More recently, the secession movement of the Harbor, Hollywood, and the San Fernando Valley has caused apprehension for the city authority (Bowers, 2002; Sonenshein, 2004). The financial crisis from 2007-08, affecting the entire nation, added insult to an already-injured city budget. The declining economy and home foreclosures tightened property taxes even further while the State of California itself suffered from a budget crisis (Arsenault, 2008).

These constraints have increasingly challenged the city to provide maintenance and improvements. Expenditure trends show that the budget spent on Public Works (which includes maintenance and improvements) was around 17-20% in the 1970s and 1980s but decreased to 5-6% by the end of the 1990s ("City of Los Angeles Budget - Revenue and Expenditures Fiscal Years 1989, 1997 & 1998," 2012; St John, 1986). In the 2012-2013 budget, 6% was allocated to Public Works (Office of the Mayor, 2013). As of 2013, the city does not provide regular services for street cleaning, bulky item removal, tree trimming, or pothole repair. In December 2013, The Los Angeles 2020 Commission published a report, titled "*A Time for Truth*" and asserted that

Los Angeles is heading for a future in which the local government can no longer afford public services. The report mentions:

> Since 1993, building and safety, economic development, street services and sanitation have cut more than 1,300 workers, and with them services throughout the City. The 311 help line is only staffed from 8 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. — hardly convenient for hardworking Angelenos to get help after they get home from work.
>
> The City has stopped disclosing how many miles of sidewalks are repaired—possibly because it is doing little in this regard. In 2008, Los Angeles trimmed almost 100,000 trees. By 2012, that number had been reduced by 75%. Less than half the debris from neighborhoods is cleaned up compared with four years ago. Libraries operate on five-day schedules with a workforce that is 30% smaller than it was just three years ago.
>
> "Investment dollars will not flow to neighborhoods that suffer from crumbling sidewalks and pothole-filled streets," notes Carol Schatz, the President and CEO of the Central City Association of Los Angeles.

These statistics demonstrate an undeniable shortage of staff and labor to provide public services. City employees and planners also confirmed this trend during my interviews with them in 2013. Many public spaces in Los Angeles indeed demonstrate the void of adequate public services to take care of trash, graffiti, and abandoned bulky items. While the Bureau of Sanitation website asserts that the city provides trash collection services once a week, it is not clear whether the cleaning is provided as scheduled, according to some neighborhood residents and community leaders.

These problems did not leave commercial areas unaffected. Commercial areas of the inner city have been exposed to problems such as disinvestment, high crime rates, and haphazard development since the migration of businesses to suburbs in the 1950s (Loukaitou-Sideris, 1997). In addition, the diminished public services as well as conflicting perceptions between the public and the government concerning who is responsible for street sanitation in commercial areas have increasingly caused more challenges for the maintenance of commercial strips in Los

Angeles (City employee, personal communication, July 9, 2013). As a result, many commercial districts have formed sublocal governance structures called business improvement districts (BIDs) to improve their environments. This pattern of emerging local governance provides an important backdrop for this study, which examines how neighborhoods establish a sublocal structure to manage local problems when the city government cannot do so. I believe that the stories of BID formation adequately represent the potentials and struggles that many sub-localities face to solve commonly shared problems.

1.2 Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)

What is a BID?

Among the aforementioned institutions that represent the rising power of the sublocal governing capacity, I focus on business improvement districts (BIDs). Absent government money and power, some property owners or business owners chose to help themselves to improve the business environment through a new governance structure, commonly known as business improvement districts (BIDs)[2] (Briffault, 1999; Mitchell, 2001a).

BIDs are organizations that aim to improve socio-physical conditions of commercial areas (Briffault 1999; Houstoun Jr. 2003; Hoyt 2005; Lewis 2010). BIDs are typically initiated by property owners or business owners who are willing to pay an additional assessment fee, normally included annually on county property tax bills, to make the commercial area safer, cleaner, and more marketable. For example, the properties marked in green in Figure 1-1 represent the boundary of a BID. Once a BID is established, a yearly assessment becomes

[2] Some cities use different nomenclature, including: special service areas (Chicago); special improvement districts (New Jersey); neighborhood improvement districts (Pennsylvania); and public improvement districts (Texas). Nonetheless, BIDs share similar structures and goals despite variation in nomenclature and the detailed tasks and processes of initiation and renewal (Mitchell 2008a).

compulsory for all property owners within the delineated BID area.[3] These assessments are spent on services including street cleaning, beautification of public spaces, reinforcement of security and transportation access, and image improvement of the particular areas to attract potential consumers and investors.

Figure 1-1. Example of BID boundary for assessments and services

Source: New York City Department of Small Business Services.

Creating BIDs is a multiple-stage process where the details of state-level legislatures and BID-governing agencies can differ by cities. In general, BID formation comprises three stages: 'planning, outreach, and legislative authorization' as summarized by the New York City Department of Small Business Services. To form a BID, a proponent group needs to come up with an agreeable plan that will guide the district management with the BID. Then the group must collect a certain level (e.g., 50-60%) of petitions and/or ballots from the rest of the business

[3] The BID assessment is compulsory for all businesses within the delineated BID area. These surtaxes, usually amounting to 1% to 3% of a business property's value and about 10% to 20% of the total property tax levied, are based on square footage, frontage, the number of service line connections, taxable assessed valuation, or the proportion of BID benefits that the business is likely to receive (Mitchell 1999, 12; Briffault 1999, 416; Lewis, 2010; Morçol and Zimmerman 2006). Regarding the subject of the assessment, Meek and Hubler (2008) note: "Nonprofits and owner-occupied residential properties are exempted from assessment. Municipalities typically pay assessments or in-lieu fees, which school districts may be exempted. Although not required to pay assessments, in some cases, state and federal agencies have voluntarily agreed to pay under 'good neighbor' policies."

community. When the property or business owners achieve the required level of support, BIDs are established through legal documentation.

BIDs are not permanent institutions. The state laws regarding BIDs generally include a "sunset law" which requires BIDs to be renewed every few years; otherwise, BIDs self-destruct after a certain period of time. In California, property-based BIDs typically must be renewed every five years. If a certain business community does not want to continue a BID or fails to go through the petition and approval stages, the BID will be expired (i.e., disestablished) automatically. And even before the renewal time, if a BID does not live up to members' expectations, BIDs can be disestablished under certain conditions according to the state laws (Office of the City Clerk, City of Los Angeles).

Efficacies of BIDs

The fact that BIDs supplement (if not replace outright) part of the functions of the government suggests that BID-like organizations now play a significant role in improving business environment and solving urban problems. Briffault (1997) asserts that "the BID and not the enterprise zone is the more likely model for future developments in big city decentralization." Both enterprise zones and BIDs are place-based economic development strategies; however, the designation and operation of BIDs are more guided by self-help and autonomous principles. While government takes the lead for enterprise zones, community stakeholders, including property owners or business owners, determine the boundary, goals, and assessment formula for BIDs. In this regard, Briffault made a point that the role of sublocal governance would grow increasingly important for future urban revitalization, a phenomenon that has indeed occurred.

The benefits of BIDs are clear in the areas that BIDs serve. BIDs reduce trash, graffiti, and deteriorated sidewalks in their domain (Mitchell 2001). BIDs increase property values and business transactions (Ellen et al. 2007) and promote residential development (Birch, 2002). Additionally, BIDs have been found to make a difference in lowering crime rate, youth violence, and prostitution (Brooks, 2008; Cook & MacDonald, 2011; Hoyt, 2005; MacDonald, Golinelli, Stokes, & Bluthenthal, 2010; Macdonald et al., 2009; Weidner, 2001).

Both the government and local stakeholders sometimes characterize BIDs as a win-win urban revitalization strategy; as a result, the number of BIDs has grown appreciably over the last two decades across the nation. BIDs have gained noticeable popularity since the 1990s as a response to accumulated urban problems and a redevelopment boom. By 1999, 44 U.S. states adopted enabling legislation that established the legal structure of BIDs (Billings & Leland, 2009). Large and small, BIDs have multiplied rapidly: from about 400 in 1999 to about 1,000 in 2010 across the nation (Cook and MacDonald 2011; Mitchell 2001). The BID model is also propagating globally: Canada, Britain, South Africa, Japan, and South Korea all have BIDs in practice or under future considerations (Cho, 2010; Morçöl, Hoyt, Meek, & Zimmerman, 2008; Murray, 2011).

Despite the innovativeness and effectiveness in problem solving, the expansion of BIDs has also provoked criticisms. Particularly, the power of BIDs over public spaces (e.g., clearance of street "nuisances" such as homeless people or vendors) is controversial (Adler, 2000; Graham & Marvin, 2001; Levy, 2001; Mitchell, 2008; Steel & Symes, 2005). In Los Angeles, the homeless community and their advocates view BIDs as threats to their space and belongings (Skid Row resident, June 6, 2013). In an interview for this dissertation, one of the advocates the homeless community in downtown Los Angeles mentioned: "When you see the bikes and cops

on the streets, those people answer to the rich people, the property owners. And I've heard countless harassment cases against the homeless people, poor people. I'm not happy with how BIDs treat homeless people." In a newspaper article in the *Los Angeles Times*, Sam Allen (2012) reported controversial views on BIDs, noting that, "…some critics say the BIDs have too much of a Big Brother feel […] as a kind of police force under the control of private executives whose aggressive cleaning up can sometimes feel like harassment."

The particular role played by the private sector also raises questions about the degree to which BIDs are democratic in their structure and operation. BIDs are designed to serve private interests, and thus the board membership and voting power are often limited to people who contribute to the budget. The exclusive nature could call into question the accountability of BIDs. A lack of transparency and open communication with other property owners or residents in the operation of BIDs could provoke criticism from the excluded party. Furthermore, the weight of votes is not equal; it is typically decided by the amount of assessment that each property owner pays. In other words, a person who owns a large property and thus has to pay high assessment fees has proportionate voting power. Critics argue that such practices "serve the interests of and concentrate power with the privileged classes" (Hoyt & Gopal-Agge, 2007).

Furthermore, since BIDs delineate an exclusive boundary, BIDs lead to or exacerbate inequalities in service delivery and thus can eventually widen the socioeconomic gap between areas within and outside BIDs (Briffault, 1997, 2010; Pack, 1992). The imbalance can result in concentrations of undesirable elements in relatively more vulnerable areas that are socio-economically marginalized, politically apathetic, and physically deteriorated (Caruso and Weber 2006; Hoyt and Gopal-Agge 2007). The term "negative spillover" refers to the possibility of BIDs pushing out social ills—such as crime, homeless, and trash—into non-BID areas that do

not have the capacity to address these issues on their own. So far, a few studies have examined potential negative spillovers primarily focusing on crime, providing mixed conclusions (Calanog, 2006; Cook & MacDonald, 2011; Hoyt, 2005).

1.3 BIDs in Los Angeles: Opportunity and Risk

Los Angeles not only offers a useful case to observe the struggle to provide public services at a municipal level as described in Section 1.1, it also helps to clearly visualize the prototypical benefits and potential issues that accompany BID formation and development. Below, I briefly describe the history of BID formation and then focus on potential issues that could accompany fragmentation of service provision.

BID Formation in Los Angeles

The formation process of BIDs varies depending on the enabling legislation by state. In California, three sections of the California Streets and Highways Code enable BIDs; among them, two laws[4] authorize currently existing BIDs in Los Angeles, established respectively in 1989 and 1994 (Meek and Hubler 2008). Both laws enable the formation of a BID, but the 1994 law allows BIDs more functions such as "financing of streets, rehabilitation or removal of existing structures, and security facilities and equipment" in addition to the ones allowed by the 1989 law, including "financing of marketing and economic development, and various supplemental municipal services such as security and sanitation." The 1994 law also allowed taxation of

[4] The two separate laws that authorize the formation of a BID can be found in:
(1) The Parking and Business Improvement Area Law of 1989 (Streets & Highways Code §36500 et seq.).
(2) Property and Business Improvement District Law of 1994 (Streets & Highways Code §36600 et seq.)
According to the California Property Tax Information, "Both laws enable a city, county, or joint powers authority (made up of cities and/or counties only) to establish a BID and levy annual assessments on businesses within its boundaries. Improvements which may be financed include parking facilities, parks, fountains, benches, trash receptacles, street lighting, and decorations. Services that may be financed include promotion of public events, furnishing music in public places and promotion of tourism."

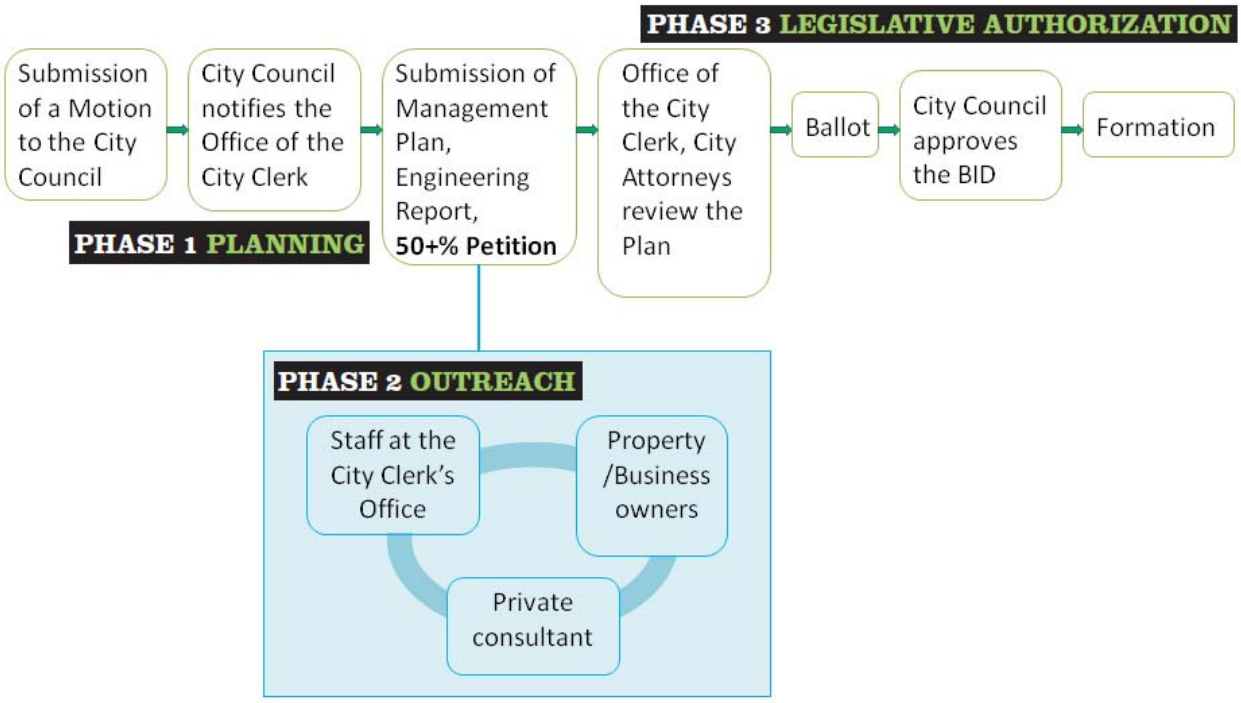
property owners while the previous one had allowed only for the taxation of merchants (Brooks, 2008).

The stages of BID formation process in Los Angeles can be demonstrated as Figure 1-2.[5] BIDs are usually proposed by a group of individuals ("proponent group"), or a Councilmember, interested in establishing a BID in a given area. After the proposal, the proponent group, with public or private assistance, prepares planning or research documents necessary for district management. More than 50 percent of the property owners must sign supporting petitions and come to an agreement on the suggested plan which includes a tentative boundary, assessment formula, and budget for the new BID. This process typically demands prohibitive time and finances. Upon receipt of the plan and petition, the City Clerk's Office conducts plan evaluation and technical review to verify the content and procedures. After the review, the City Clerk's Office recommends the plan to the City Council and related Committees for approval. This stage is considered the *formation* of a BID. The rest of the steps are largely legislative; the business community must adhere to numerous types of statutory deadlines and city requirements for public hearings, legal documentation, and a return of a ballot vote in which 50 percent of the casted ballots, weighted by assessment, is required. This stage of institutionalization is considered the *establishment* of a BID.[6]

[5] Major sources of information for the process of BID formation include "Citywide business improvement district program: District formation activity guidelines" prepared by the Office of the City Clerk, Los Angeles; a book chapter on Los Angeles BIDs (Meek and Hubler 2008); and my phone interview with the City Clerk staff, Rick Scott (2013). When details mismatched, I prioritized the information from the interview and the guidelines from the city assuming that it is more updated than the information from the published work by Meek and Hubler in 2008.

[6] While mixed accounts characterize the terms, "formation" and "establishment," I will mostly use the term "formation" in this research because the main focus of this research concerns the process of "formation" (i.e., the process that requires intensive community outreach and collective action among property owners) rather than of "establishment" (i.e., the process that primarily requires legislative work and less intensive collective action).

Figure 1-2. BID formation process in Los Angeles



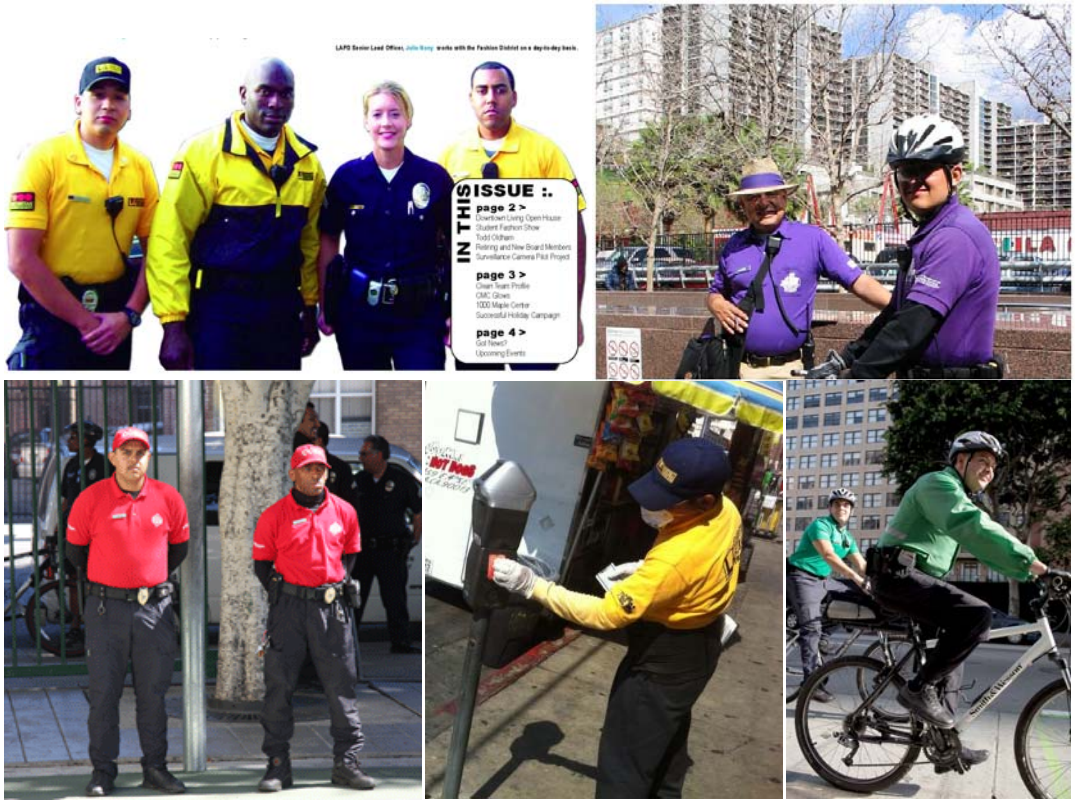
Of the major cities in California, Los Angeles has established the most BIDs. As of 2013, Los Angeles has established 44 BIDs since the 1990s, but five of them have expired (i.e., are no longer operating). Of the remaining, 34 BIDs are property-based and five BIDs are merchant-based (The Office of the City Clerk staff, phone interview, January 22, 2013). These types vary primarily by whether the assessment is levied against the merchant or the property owner, the life span of the BID, and the petition thresholds for initiation of the BID (Meek and Hubler 2008). In this research, my primary focus is on property-based BIDs because they are the more common form of BIDs with a longer time perspective.[7]

The efficacy of BIDs is evident. Walking along downtown, employees with purple, red, yellow, and green uniforms sweep the streets. The trash cans are emptied by the cleaning teams

[7] Property-based BIDs follow the "Sunset law" which requires BIDs to be renewed every few years, whereas merchant-based BIDs must renew every year.

almost every day. Men with special colored T-shirts patrol for public safety. During exploratory field research for this project in 2012, one textile business owner who has run a store in the Fashion District in Los Angeles for 17 years said, "If those people don't come for one week, or even two days, this area is a problem. This area will not be safe." Another clothing storeowner said, "When there's any problem, we call those guys first because they show up more quickly than cops." These comments demonstrate that the role of BIDs has become an integral part of the daily activities of the businesses. Some examples of the BID activities are presented in Figure 1-3.

Figure 1-3. Examples of the work crew for multiple BIDs in downtown Los Angeles

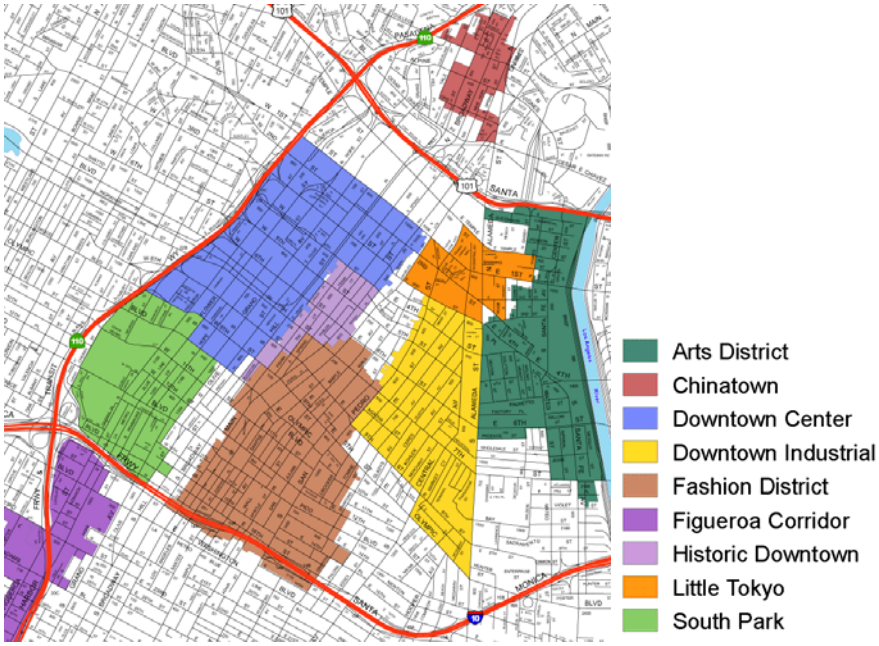


Courtesy of Clean and Safe Team, photos from BID websites and newspapers.

Fragmented Street Management

Although BIDs are powerful tools to provide various services, the territorial characteristics of BIDs suggest that service provision could increasingly become fragmented and thus unequal across the city. Trash removal in downtown Los Angeles demonstrates this point. As shown in Figure 1-4, BIDs are concentrated in downtown Los Angeles. Since BIDs provide territorialized services, streets are no longer holistically managed by the government. Each BID manages its own trash receptacles: the Central City East BID owns red metal cans; the Historic District owns white cans, and the Fashion District owns green ones.

Figure 1-4. Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in downtown Los Angeles, 2010



Source: City of Los Angeles (2010).

A side effect of the fragmented and exclusive service provision is that the same quality of services will not be provided across the city. As briefly discussed in Section 1.2, exclusive BID services could result in widening the socioeconomic gap between areas within and outside BIDs and concentrating undesirable elements in areas without BIDs (Briffault, 1997, 2010; Caruso &

Weber, 2006; Hoyt & Gopal-Agge, 2007; Pack, 1992). Figure 1-4 also shows areas that are surrounded by BIDs but do not have BIDs themselves. According to my street observations and archival research (Hiltzik, 2009; Zavis, 2012), these areas (e.g., the Toy District and Skid Row) contain a high concentration of homeless populations and trash. During community meetings and personal interactions, residents near the Toy District and Skid Row also complained about overflowing trash and rat infestation, especially since the discontinuation of the Toy District BID in 2010.[8] The recent report "The Dirty Divide in Downtown Los Angeles" (Los Angeles Community Action Network, 2013) points out that the disparity in trash removal and restroom services caused health disparity in downtown. Figure 1-5 presents the trash scenes captured by one of the residents near the Toy District.

Figure 1-5. Trash in the Toy District in Los Angeles

Left: 5th St. & Los Angeles St., Right: Los Angeles St. & Winston St.
Photos by Hal McMath.

The large variety of trash cans also suggestively reflect the gap in the economic resources of these sublocal areas in downtown. For example, Skid Row areas have gray plastic trash bins so- called "funky trash cans" which cost $29.95 apiece at Home Depot, painted and donated by

[8] The Toy District BID was not renewed after its first 5-year term due to a lack of interest among property owners. According to my interviews with BID staff and consultants who are familiar with the history of the BID, the Toy District BID was originally established by two or three people who owned the majority of properties in the district. They did not renew the term because they thought they did not need a BID. Since then, the Toy District has not re-established a BID despite the emergence of various problems mentioned above.

residents. The most common form of open-lid metal cans cost about $200-500 apiece. And there are BigBelly Solar, solar-power operated trash compactors in Pershing Square, the hub of recent downtown redevelopment, which cost $4,000-5,000 apiece depending on the attachment of recycling units. Some examples of the various trash cans in downtown Los Angeles are displayed in Figure 1-6.

Figure 1-6. Various trash receptacles owned by BIDs and other institutions

Photos by author and Kristin Hopfenbeck (2013-2014).
Top left: Plastic garbage bin in Skid Row, Top right: Solar-powered garbage bin in Pershing Square.
Bottom left and right: Trash bins managed by BIDs.

In this section I described the important role of BIDs and the implications of their rise for the areas with and without them. While BIDs can effectively make improvements, the private and exclusive characteristics of BIDs could lead to a gap in both streetscape improvement and, potentially, in further development of business and economic opportunities. This gap could generate unfavorable implications particularly for already marginalized neighborhoods that may struggle with a lack of fiscal and human capital to initiate efforts to improve their business environments.

1.4 Purpose of Research

This research project began with the inquiry of areas that do not have BIDs. As BIDs have spread over Los Angeles over the last few decades, it has become noticeable that not every commercial district has established BIDs. Some communities may not have BIDs because they do not realize the need to form BIDs (i.e., they do not have urgent collective problems to solve); however, it is also possible that some communities fail to form BIDs despite their interest in doing so.

Given that some areas without BIDs are potentially at risk for both absolute and relative deterioration, this research questions whether 'forming a BID' is at least an equally feasible and achievable goal for all communities. It is an important question for equitable urban management because disadvantaged communities that struggle with social problems as well as with the establishment of economic development tools such as BIDs could grow even more isolated in service delivery and economic development. I specifically examined the possibility that areas with inconclusive or ineffective efforts for BID formation may disproportionally be marginalized

neighborhoods, which can greatly benefit from BIDs. In fact, this study finds that the areas with unsuccessful attempts of BID formation are relatively low-income immigrant neighborhoods.

The main purpose of this research is thus to examine *what factors could hinder or facilitate successful formation of BIDs in low-income multiethnic neighborhoods in inner city Los Angeles*.[9] This question achieves the following critical purposes: (1) understanding the kind of struggle that low-income immigrant neighborhoods usually experience in BID formation, (2) broadening the current theoretical and empirical understandings of multicultural community organizing, and (3) guiding a more equitable distribution of public services and resources that can support the formation of self-help economic development tools such as BIDs in the neighborhoods at risk for lagging behind. Findings of this study will help city governments and community stakeholders navigate community development and organizing practices in the time of privatized and fragmented urban management.

For a close examination of the subject, I present a comparative case study of two neighborhoods in Los Angeles: MacArthur Park and the Byzantine Latino Quarter. In both neighborhoods BID formation is active on paper; however, MacArthur Park has not been able to establish a BID over the last several years, whereas the Byzantine Latino Quarter succeeded in establishing a BID in 2003 and is in a process of renewing it. Therefore, comparison of the two cases offers meaningful explanations for broader concerns in planning about how community

[9] I acknowledge that the term "inner city" can carry negative or derogatory connotations given that the inner city has been depicted as a place of "the underclass" and social pathologies since the publication of many seminal literatures of urban poverty in the 1980s and 1990s (Massey & Denton, 1993; Wacquant & Wilson, 1989; Wilson, 1987, 1996). The study areas in this dissertation, as low-income neighborhoods in central Los Angeles, make connections to some of the problems described in the conventional studies of the inner city to some degree. For example, parts of central Los Angeles deal with problems related to gang activities and crime that remain from the 1990s. However, my intention of using the term "inner city" is not to remind the reader of the social problems but mainly to indicate the geographical characteristics of the neighborhoods—that is, near downtown or in central city areas. I also use the term "inner city" with a hope that this dissertation sheds light on the contemporary meaning of inner city by providing a case study on "cities not only outside the northeast-midwest belt but also populated by high proportions of nonblack poor people, many of whom are immigrant" (Small & Newman, 2001, p.26).

stakeholders organize community development efforts, what factors can facilitate or delay the establishment of autonomous local organizations, and what roles the public and private sectors serve in the establishment processes.

The following chapters will proceed as follows: Chapter 2 discusses previous literature on BID formation and suggests a new conceptual framework that can better inform the BID formation process in low-income multiethnic neighborhoods. Chapter 3 elaborates the methods of the study. I discuss the rationale for the research design (i.e., an in-depth case study) and data collection methods and procedures. The research involved collecting archival data, observations, and in-depth interviews with property owners, private consultants, community organization staff, and city employees. Chapter 4 describes, in detail, the history and socioeconomic background of the two selected neighborhoods. Chapter 5 will detail the history of BID formation in each case and identify the similarities and differences between the two cases regarding the characteristics of community organizing that existed for BID formation. More specifically, I discuss key differences between the two neighborhoods, focusing on the aspects of source of leadership, organizational resources, functionality of Neighborhood Councils, and attitude towards multi-ethnicity. Chapter 6 revisits the main findings of this study and summarizes the potential theoretical and policy impacts of this study.

Chapter 2

BID Formation as Multicultural Community Organizing

A plethora of BID literature concerns the description and promotional information of BIDs. Within the BID literature, those pertaining to 'BID formation' have been mainly descriptive (i.e., how to form BIDs). In this chapter, I narrow my focus to the literature that discusses the relevant frameworks and analyses of BID formation. Each of the following sections discusses literature that has helped formulate the research questions and the theoretical framework adopted in this study. Section 2.1 reviews the main take-away points from the existing literature on BID formation and summarizes two major theoretical frameworks that have for the most part guided the prior research on BIDs. Section 2.2 discusses a gap in knowledge that provokes a more in-depth analysis of the BID formation process in a specific neighborhood context. Section 2.3 introduces an additional guiding framework that will help inform the inquiry of this study.

2.1 Perspectives on BID Formation

To date, there have been relatively few—and all fairly recent—attempts in the literature to explain the formation of BIDs, compared to efforts in law or political science that have made substantial contribution to defining structural characteristics of BIDs. The major focus of the existing research on BID formation has been on identifying *where* BIDs form and *what factors* affect the formation result. These efforts are primarily econometric analyses that have examined the effects of socio-spatial factors on the formation result at various scales of unit of

observations—at the levels of states, cities, neighborhoods, and properties. I discuss the key findings by the scale-order of the unit of observations.

Some studies identified the relative importance of state legislation and city environment for BID formation. At a state level, BID formation[10] was positively correlated with the presence of enabling legislation that requires less than majority approval (Billings & Leland, 2009). At a city level, BID formation was found to show a weak relationship with residential heterogeneity, meaning that the degree of city condition in terms of income, education level, race, and age was not a significant determinant for BID formation (Brooks, 2006, 2007).

At more micro-levels, the factors were examined at the level of neighborhoods and properties. At a neighborhood level, one New York City-based study found that factors such as percentage of commercial space, percentage of valuable commercial properties, household income, and population density were positively related to BID formation (Meltzer, 2012). At a property level, mixed findings exist. Brooks and Strange (2011) found that property owners who advocate the formation of BIDs show larger property assessed values, number of parcels, and structure square footage compared to other BID members who did not vote for a BID. In addition, larger properties are more likely to participate in the organization of BIDs whereas smaller properties are less likely to support BID formation. Brooks and Strange assert that the existence of "anchor participants"—key community players who are willing to bear the cost of BID formation—is crucial for the viability of BIDs. In contrast, Meltzer (2012) found that properties with higher values are less likely to opt into BIDs. Meltzer interpreted this finding that properties with relatively higher values do not welcome large assessment fees whereas properties with

[10] These studies used the term 'formation' as final establishment of BIDs, rather than formation process, but I keep the term 'formation' to be consistent with word choice used in the original studies.

lower values prefer to be part of a BID because they could receive the same level of BID services while paying a smaller assessment fee. Meltzer's findings imply that while a few powerful property owners could motivate the initial foundation of BIDs, the voting process of BID proposal could still depend greatly on the smaller (majority) property owners.

The majority of the aforementioned studies either do not have a specific theoretical framework, or are ground in two streams of theories in economics—theories of public choice and collective action. The seminal public choice theory that enlightens the continuing trend in city management practices is *A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures* by Tiebout (1956). Tiebout explains the formation logic of local governments based on the need and preference of self-interested individuals. He contends that decentralized governments provide opportunities for consumer-voters to choose a community of residence which best satisfies their preferences for type and level of local services, regulation, tax burden, and shopping opportunities. Therefore, local government is an advantageous governing structure relative to central government for efficiently delivering customized services and regulations. In terms of BID formation, public choice theory explains the logic of forming BID-like sublocal governance structures based on the heterogeneous availability of public goods, various local tastes and customized services, and territorial variances associated with BID (Billings and Leland 2009; Brooks and Strange 2011; Brooks 2006, 2007).

In addition, collective action theory provides a rationale for forming a group based on individuals' self-interest. The theoretical matrix of the collective action begins with *The Logic of Collective Action* by Olson (1971), which establishes a fundamental framework for the relationship between self-interest and common interest (or group interest). In summary, Olson contends that:

> Indeed, unless the number of individuals in a group is quite small, or unless there is coercion or some other special device to make individuals act in their common interest, rational, self-interested individuals will not act to achieve their common or group interests. (Olson, p. 2)

Olson's key argument provides a number of economic principles that guide the formation logic of BIDs at least to some degree, including: (1) the members of the group would prefer that they pay less for the entire cost of providing public goods (p. 21); (2) the larger a group is, the less it will further its common interests (p. 36); and (3) one way to stimulate a collective action is to provide a separate and selective incentives for the members of the group (p. 51). Applied to BID formation, these principles imply that property owners can face a problem in acting collectively despite common goals for the community, depending on the cost and benefit of individuals; and to overcome a free-riding problem, BIDs operate based on exclusive membership that requires compulsory contributions to the collective budget.

Aside from the research focusing on economic principles, few studies have mentioned the potential influence of social characteristics of communities on the outcome of BID formation. Ellen and collegues (2007) point out that BIDs may be formed in areas that systemically differ from other neighborhoods around the city and specifically suggested several possible factors that can act as catalysts for BID formation, including the existence of long-standing neighborhood problems (e.g., high levels of crime and poor infrastructure), the establishment of a local development corporation, and local organizational capacity. The factors suggested by Ellen et al. (2007), however, have not been adequately examined in prior literature on BID formation.

Despite some useful findings, the existing perspectives on BID formation do not explain one very critical aspect of BID formation—the process of community organizing by which community stakeholders consider adjusting their self-interest and participating in collective

action. In the next sections I discuss the gap in knowledge and suggest a new guiding perspective that can help examine the process of BID formation in low-income immigrant neighborhoods.

2.2 Gap in Knowledge

While the existing studies signal a meaningful start, they do not provide directly applicable insights into how business communities (could) actually form BIDs. Acknowledging the fact that BID formation requires intense long-term outreach, I point out that the discussion on how communities organize the collective efforts to form BIDs has been under-considered in the BID literature. To examine the formation process of BIDs in low-income multiethnic neighborhoods, I suggest conceptualizing BIDs and BID formation with a perspective of community organizing in this research. This section elaborates three points of shortcomings in understanding that prompted the integration of the new perspective.

Gap 1: The existing literature has conceptualized the motivations to form BIDs mainly based on the economic interests of individual property owners, rather than based on collective vision of a community. The theories on which previous research is grounded—theories of public choice and collective action—conceptualize BID formation as somewhat similar to forming a local government or an interest group. The major implications of these theories for BID formation have been the conceptualization of the nature of self-interested individuals and the logic of their decision-making process. The presupposition that property owners act upon their self-interests is still useful to explain the success or failure of BID formation efforts to some degree. For example, it would make sense if neighborhoods with a high percentage of absentee property owners turn out to struggle with BID formation because those neighborhoods would probably lack property owners with strong economic interests. However, explanations that focus

on individuals would shed little light on the relative influence of more macro-level factors on individual actions, including a cultural identity, a sense of community, or organizational capacity of a community (Chavis & Wandersman, 1990). This research thus focuses on identifying diverse actors—not only property owners but also other individuals and organizations—who contribute to the formation of BIDs and how they initiate collective action. This approach helps contextualize BID formation from the perspective that considers them as more than a mere sum of the interests of property owners and reflects a collective vision of a community.

Gap 2: The existing literature has approached BID formation as an outcome rather than as a process. Past analyses primarily approached 'BID formation' as the post-condition of BID formation whereby BID formation is conceptualized as a binary outcome (whether a BID exists or not: 'BID exists=1', 'BID does not exist=0'). The relative weight on outcome or performance of existing organizations also mirrors the patterns in the literature concerning the formation of similar characteristics of community-based organizations (e.g., community development corporations (CDCs)). In general the previous research on CDCs has been limited to examining the emergence of, or successful management of, community organizations. However, very little information has been gleaned about "smaller, younger, struggling, or failed" organizations (Gittell & Wilder, 1999; Stoutland, 1999). Likewise, most research covers only those BIDs in existence at the time of the study; less is known about to what degree or why some attempts to form BIDs failed.

The limitation of presuming BIDs as a pre-existing outcome, however, lies in the inability of this approach to explain very well when there is a mismatch between the motivation and the outcome of BID formation, i.e., a situation in which neighborhoods fail to form BIDs despite their interests in forming them. If there are neighborhoods that are too incompetent or

discordant to even start organizing efforts to form BIDs, the implications of 'not having BIDs' can be more complex than just the absence of a voluntary community organization. It implies that certain neighborhoods could struggle at the stage of forming BIDs, which would affect the outcome of BID formation.

As described in Chapter 1, BID formation is indeed a lengthy political process that involves intensive outreach, persuasion, and negotiation processes among property owners and potentially prohibitive expenditures of time, money, and human resources. The success of BID formation is thus contingent upon various factors (e.g., political relationships, social networking, or a sense of urgent need among key stakeholders) that can affect the characteristics of the formation process. Yet, the variables examined in the existing studies mostly concern characteristics of properties, not those of decision-makers. For example, previous studies have examined BID formation particularly relative to the neighborhood condition and property characteristics (e.g., property type and value); the main findings demonstrated that BIDs are more likely to form when owners of larger properties support BID formation (Brooks & Strange, 2011) and when commercial areas show signs of relative appreciation and growth (Meltzer, 2012). However, concepts that account for the political and social processes of BID formation are lacking in the existing literature.

Gap 3: The existing literature lacks an in-depth understanding of specific neighborhood contexts that could facilitate or hinder BID formation. Particularly, the context of this research—low-income multiethnic neighborhoods—has not been well-understood for BID formation despite its important implications for equitable inner city development. Some economics studies have considered neighborhood socioeconomic factors (e.g., percent of white population, average household income, heterogeneity of poverty) (Brooks, 2007; Meltzer, 2012); however, by

statistically controlling for those factors, this research has in fact conceptually generalized neighborhood effects for BID formation. Planning literature has also depicted BIDs mainly as an economic development strategy adopted in central city areas that aspire to become like shopping malls in suburbs (Houstoun, 2003), but not as much as a community development tool in inner city neighborhoods that struggle with poverty and social problems. Situating BIDs in the community development framework, multiple new factors come to the fore concerning BID formation, including the characteristics and motivations of various groups, and intergroup relationships of community stakeholders in the struggles to form BIDs.

In sum, the aforementioned gap in knowledge prompts a guiding framework that could deepen our understanding of community-level motivation for BID formation, the process of BID formation, and the context of low-income multiethnic neighborhoods for BID formation.

2.3 Guiding Framework: Multicultural Community Organizing

In order to supplement the scope of the prior work, I suggest an additional framework for this study. I argue that the link between 'self-interest' (i.e., individuals act upon self-interest) and 'collective action' (i.e., self-interested individuals tak collective action) is not well understood and that the process of community organizing can explain the link between the two components. In this section I first establish the meaning and role of community organizing and discuss the recent focus of community organizing—consensus building—that has significant implications for community development and also with respect to BID formation. At the end I narrow to the importance and lack of understanding of multicultural community organizing.

The Role of Community Organizing

Community organizing has been regarded as a core element of progressive social change and community practice in various fields including social work, urban planning, and public health (Fisher & Shragge, 2000; Gittell & Vidal, 1998; Minkler, 2005). Part of the goal and general mechanism of organizing overlaps with those of BID formation. For example, the following definition of organizing by Rubin and Rubin (2008) suggests that the organizing process could play a critical role for BID formation by joining collective efforts to solve shared problems and by strengthening interpersonal, social, and community relationships.

> **Organizing** entails working with people to help them recognize that they face shared problems and to discover that by joining together they can fight to overcome these problems. Organizing builds upon and strengthens interpersonal, social, and community relationships while establishing ongoing organizations that enable people to sustain collective actions. (Rubin & Rubin, 2008, p. 7)

The three-tiered strategy of community organization proposed by Reisch and Wenocur (1986) also implies that organizing could contribute to the formation of voluntary community organizations. The three components of the strategy include (1) the expansion of existing social services; (2) the development of service distribution in both the public and voluntary sectors; and (3) the creation of community-based institutions of economic and political power. The second component seems particularly related to BID formation. Reisch and Wenocur also explain the role of organizers as follows:

> In the public sector, […] organizers can promote the decentralization of service delivery and the replacement of large, centralized welfare institutions with neighborhood-based services […] In the voluntary sector, organizers can play a key role in the promotion of experimental forms of service delivery, the creation of self-help organizations, and the expansion of already established service networks. (Reisch & Wenocur, 1986, p87).

The fact that organizers can promote decentralized, neighborhood-based, self-help service delivery confirms that community organizing and BID formation has a reciprocal relationship.

Despite the overarching definition and goals, throughout history organizing has served various roles for making social change. The type of organizing I focus on in this research is particularly associated with the context of community development. In a nutshell, the role of organizing has evolved along with the change in the focus of political agenda and policy in the United States. In the 1960s and 70s, community organizing had explicit or implicit ties with the civil rights, new left, and women's movements (Fisher & Shragge, 2000; Gutierrez & Lewis, 1995; Morris, 1984). The underlying motivation for organizing was to challenge social inequalities and oppressive power, and empower racial and socioeconomic groups that have been systematically discriminated against (Alinsky, 1971; Fisher, 1984; Gittell & Vidal, 1998; Kahn, 1994). This context forms a 'social action' or 'political activist' model in which organizing has confrontational or conflictual characteristics.

In the 1980s and 1990s, however, the characteristics of organizing shifted. As described in Chapter 1, during this time the government cut funding and reconstructed the delivery mechanism of social and economic provision. Public-private partnerships and community initiatives grew as alternatives. If the earlier goal of organizing was power itself, the later focus of community work became "building relationships in the neighborhoods, developing partnerships with the powerful, using consensus strategies and tactics in order to actualize community capacity" (Fisher & Shragge, 2000, p7). In this model, community organizations and other actors are engaged in a consensus-building process. Compared to the previous model of conflictual organizing, Gittell and Vidal (1998) describe consensus building as:

> Consensus organizing frames its goal very differently from conflictual organizing. The objectives are to develop neighborhood leadership, organize community-based and controlled organizations, and facilitate respectful and mutually beneficial relationships between neighborhood-based leaders and organizations and the larger metropolitan-area support community. (Gittell and Vidal, 1998, 52)

The 'consensus-building' model is also closely related to the 'community-building' model of community organizing as suggested by Smock (2004). The community-building model focuses on strengthening the community's internal social and economic capacity to solve its own problems. Community-building practitioners use an asset-based approach which sees every institution and organization—nonprofits, businesses, public agencies, and churches—as a potential source of resources to rebuild the community. Both of these recent community organizing models (i.e., consensus-building and community-building) underscore the process of building leadership, relationships, and community capacity. Given this context, this research uses the term, community organizing, as a consensus-building and community-building process in the context of community development.

Multicultural and Multilingual Organizing

One of the major contributions of this research is to build a deeper understanding of community organizing specifically in the context of multiethnic neighborhoods. Multicultural community organizing integrates the concept and implications of diversity into theoretical discussion and everyday community practice. While the term, *multicultural community organizing,* provokes differing interpretations among practitioners (Gutierrez, Lewis, Nagda, Wernick, & Shore, 2005), its main objective can be shared as "to achieve reciprocal empowerment so that the [diverse ethnic] groups together can work toward social justice" (Gutierrez, Alvarez, Nemon, & Lewis, 1996).

The emerging discussion on multicultural community organizing reflects the changing environment of community practice in the late 20st century. Since the 1970s, newly arrived immigrants have diversified the racial and ethnic compositions of cities, shifting away from the traditional black-white dynamic to the multiethnic structure (Maly, 2005). One of four Americans will be either Latino or Asian by the year 2030 (Frey & DeVol, 2000); a white majority will cease by 2059 at the latest (Stodghill & Bower, 2002). Accordingly, neighborhoods comprising multiple ethnic minorities have rapidly increased in the United States (Nyden, Lukehart, Maly, & Peterman, 1998; Vitiello, 2009).

A growing trend of multiracial and multiethnic neighborhoods and their rich and multiple ethnic contexts present challenges for community practice. Since the socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds of the newly emerging ethnic communities are more diversified than before, community workers must be aware of and sensitive to the diverse needs and preferences of these groups. For example, monolingual, low-income refugees may require different community services and resources from multilingual, moderate-income professionals. In addition, older and newer generations may prefer different communication styles and activities relative to community organizing. Furthermore, community organizers need to better understand and relate to intergroup relationships particularly along with the issues of economic inequality and racial/ethnic stereotypes. Daley and Wong (1994) point out that competition for housing, entrepreneurship, services, and educational opportunities in the inner city can lead to serious tensions, as demonstrated in historic conflicts among Cubans, African Americans, and Haitians in Miami in 1988 and between African Americans and Koreans in Los Angeles in 1992. These incidents indicate that diversity can complicate intergroup relationships and suggest that intergroup dynamics can be the main determinant for achieving inclusive participation for

community development. These challenges call for guidelines that can reduce political, economic, and cultural tensions and, simultaneously, enhance cooperation among various ethnic groups.

At least a new role of community organizers has been identified in a multicultural context. Based on a case study in a low-income, multiethnic, bilingual community in Los Angeles, Heskin and Heffner (1987) argues that in order to succeed in multicultural organizing, organizers should fulfill three roles: organizer, interpreter, and multicultural mediator. Heskin and Heffner also suggest guidelines to keep these roles separate. If the same person plays all three roles—organizing, interpreting, and multicultural mediating—it can lead to conflicts of interest and a concentration of power that can hinder participation of diverse actors in decision-making processes.

Still, the multicultural dimensions of practice have been relatively absent in the community organizing literature. The past work attempting to reflect diversity provides at most either general principles for community organizing or case studies of organizing practices among certain racial or ethnic communities of color (e.g., African Americans, Native Americans, ethnic minorities) (Daley & Wong, 1994; Rivera & Erlich, 1998; Shaw, 2009). What have been relatively missing are actual cases of community organizing and collaboration among multiethnic groups and their implications for similar neighborhood contexts. The existing accounts fall short of providing a clear picture of the issues with multicultural and multilingual organizing in a neighborhood context in which majority of participants are people of color. Potential questions to ask to deepen our understanding of community practices with diverse populations include: 'Who plays a community organizer's role,' 'How does the organizer

embrace diverse groups,' 'What kind of organizing strategies are useful for multicultural organizing', 'If certain ethnic groups tend (not) to participate, why.'

Serving people from diverse backgrounds in a context of limited resources is a challenging task. Prior perspectives provide important economic principles that help unfold the complexity involved in the relationships between individual and group interests. By integrating the new perspective of BID formation into these prior perspectives, i.e., acquiring an in-depth understanding of the dynamics among community stakeholders and the processes of community organizing, this research will not only contribute to lessening the knowledge gap but also help to address the struggles in forming autonomous community-based organizations in low-income multiethnic neighborhoods.

New findings on multicultural and multilingual organizing could enrich the discussion in planning concerning the efficacy of communicative, collaborative, pluralistic, and participatory planning models (Healey, 2003; Huxley, 2000). Multicultural environments require planning instruments to be sensitive to the social needs of diverse ethnic communities. For example, Qadeer (1997) drew lessons from the example of the Canadian bylaws of 'cutting trees,' showing that a seemingly neutral regulation in fact is an embodiment of English/European preferences. In this example, ethnic minority groups expressed unique sets of desires and requests for community services, housing facilities, and neighborhood arrangements, which have not been adequately dealt with by contemporary planning practices. In addition, Qadeer underscores that the presence of ethnic neighborhoods and ethnic business enclaves are epicenters in which the impact of multiculturalism on urban planning is the greatest. The issue of diversity thus becomes important in planning processes; accordingly, planning strategies are increasingly challenged to be depoliticized, equitable, and empowering (Colombijn & Erdentug, 2002). In this regard, the

suggested framework in this study—multicultural community organizing—will help enlighten local planning and development practices by addressing the need and justification to promote participation, value processes, and increase cultural sensitivity.

Chapter 3

Methodology of Study

This study adopts a case study design that compares two neighborhoods—MacArthur Park (also known as Westlake) and the Byzantine Latino Quarter ('BLQ', part of Pico-Union). MacArthur Park does not have a BID while the BLQ has had a BID for the last ten years and is currently in the process of renewing the BID for another five years. In this chapter, I explain the rationale for a comparative case study design and case selection, followed by the description of data collection and analysis methods.

3.1 A Comparative Case Study

A case study provides description, analysis, and understanding of a case or cases, which fosters considerable depth to understand the "how" and "why" of complex contemporary events (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2009). Since a case study enables in-depth investigation, it has proven to be a particularly useful tool for examining processes and problems, evaluating programs, and informing policy in applied fields of study such as education, social work, administration, and health (Merriam, 2009). Likewise, the case study method is commonly used in urban planning because (1) the complexities of urban phenomenon and processes often do not generate clean data sets for statistical analyses, (2) such complexities make controlled experimentation less viable, and (3) case studies are effective tools to identify and detail the actual steps of best practice for planning (Campbell, 2003). In general, case studies have advantages for hypothesis

generating, rather than hypothesis *testing*, and for investigating causal *mechanisms* rather than causal *effects* (Gerring, 2007). The nature of my research question justifies the use of a case study method since the question of 'how commercial district stakeholders form sublocal governance (i.e., BIDs)' is an inquiry into mechanisms rather than effects. An in-depth case study allows detailed description of cases and development of themes that can characterize previously unexplored factors that contribute to BID formation.

In terms of a case study design, this study adopts a comparative study which can strengthen the findings from a single case alone and offers an opportunity for theoretical replication (Yin, 2009). Specifically, this study examines two similar cases that show different outcomes. This design fits what Gerring (2007) refers to as choosing "most-similar cases" as he describes as follows:

> If the study is exploratory (i.e., hypothesis-generating), the researcher looks for cases that differ on the outcome of theoretical interest but are similar on various factors that might have contributed to that outcome…Often, fruitful analysis begins with an apparent anomaly: two cases are apparently quite similar, and yet demonstrate surprisingly different outcomes. The hope is that intensive study of these cases will reveal one - or at most several- factors that differ across these cases. These differing factors are the putative causes (p.131).

In this study, therefore, I deliberately selected two cases that offer contrasting situations. One case represents a neighborhood that struggles to form a BID, whereas the other case represents a neighborhood that successfully formed a BID. Despite the contrasting history of BID formation, these two cases share similar socioeconomic condition, which facilitates a meaningful comparison. The comparison can identify how and why the BID formation process has diverged in similar neighborhoods depending on the community organizing processes.

3.2 Case Study Site Selection

This project involves a case study of commercial districts in Los Angeles. I selected Los Angeles for the case study site because Los Angeles, a prototypical global city and an immigrant gateway city since World War II, is one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the United States. Los Angeles is also a city where multi-racial/ethnic minorities form residential enclaves and commercial districts. The problems and potentials associated with urban growth and management in Los Angeles are increasingly relevant to many cities in the United States and other parts of the world. Fishman (1996), in *Rethinking Los Angeles*, notes, "If Los Angeles has risen to the grandeur of a global city, its problem now defines the urban crisis of our own time" (p. 259).

Furthermore, Los Angeles represents an urban context where the lack of governance in commercial areas is becoming increasingly common. Financial scarcity due to the property tax limit of the 1970s, and more recently, the abolishment of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) in 2011 have contributed to a decreasing role of the public authority and in turn the increasing needs of and opportunities for local governance. Local communities are under pressure to achieve revitalization and redevelopment on their own by adopting new autonomous governance such as BIDs. As a result, many neighborhoods of Los Angeles have formed BIDs over the last 15 years.

Among the neighborhoods in central Los Angeles, one struggling case and one successful case for BID formation were selected for this research. In order to identify these cases, I first focused on finding a neighborhood that struggle with BID formation among areas that proposed to form BIDs. According to the list uploaded to the Los Angeles Office of the City Clerk website,

38 BIDs existed and 19 BIDs were at a 'proposed' stage as of 2013. 'Proposed districts' refer to "areas under consideration relative to feasibility and include areas which have begun the formation process" as opposed to 'established districts' which refer to "areas that have completed the legislative process and are commencing or continuing operations" ("Citywide Business Improvement District Program," n.d.).

However, it turns out that not all 19 BIDs were proposed in completely new neighborhoods. Some of the proposed districts overlap with those on the list of established districts; I suspect that these BIDs are in fact already established, and that the list of proposed districts does not reflect up-to-date information. In addition, some proposed districts seem to merely expand existing districts (e.g., Chinatown → Chinatown Expansion, Larchmont Village → North Larchmont). Excluding the BIDs that are already established and mere expansions of existing BIDs, the remainder of the proposed districts appears to be in neighborhoods that have not had BIDs before. These seven districts show relatively slow and inconclusive BID formation progresses compared to other established BIDs. The Los Angeles City Council file records show that these districts have not formed BIDs several years after they submitted a motion to form a BID, which is longer than the average of 18 to 22 months typically taken for BID formation (staff specialist at the Los Angeles Office of the City Clerk, phone interview, January 22, 2013). Since the progress of these cases is poorly understood, they are categorized as "unidentified" in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1. List of "proposed districts" categorized by three statuses as of 2013

Already established	Expansion/Renewal of existing BIDs	Unidentified
Century City	Chinatown Expansion	Cesar Chavez-Boyle Heights
Historic Sunset (Sunset and Vine)	Crenshaw	MacArthur Park
Panorama City	Greater Lincoln Heights	Olympic Boulevard
San Pedro	Lincoln Heights Industrial Expansion	Pacoima
Westwood Village	North Larchmont	Sun Valley
	Pico Corridor	York Boulevard
	Wilmington Industrial	Woodland Hills

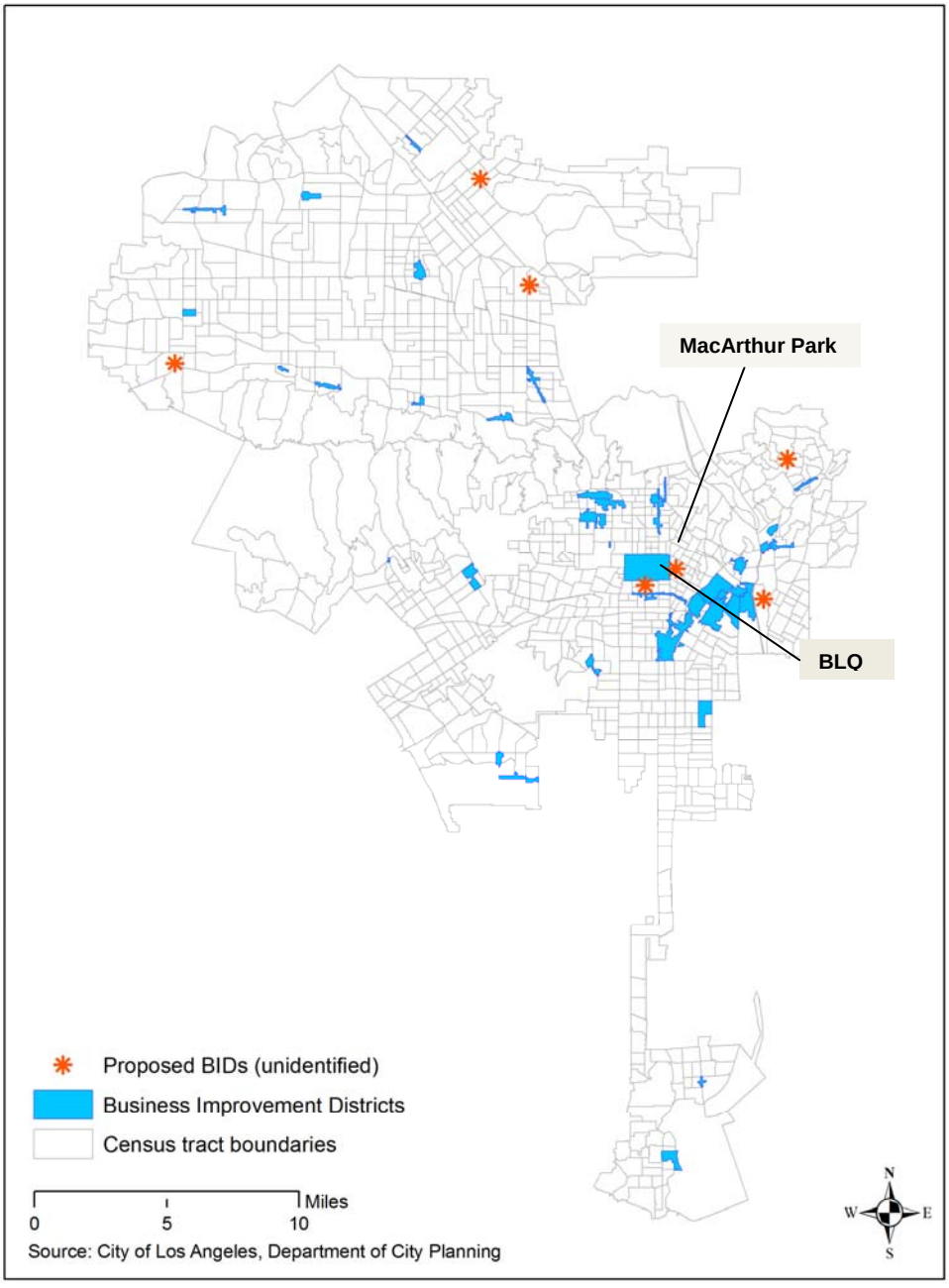
Source: Los Angeles Office of the City Clerk.

Among the "unidentified" cases, MacArthur Park is selected for the case study site. The specialist at the Office of the City Clerk pointed out that MacArthur Park is one of the neighborhoods that has taken a particularly long time to form a BID among proposed districts. MacArthur Park proposed a BID a few years ago but still has not officially formed a BID. According to Sandoval (2010)'s description of the history of neighborhood development, local stakeholders had been engaged in the discussion of establishing a BID, and BID formation sounds promising and even near completion. Furthermore, archival evidence showed that the City Council and the Office of the City Clerk supported the process of BID formation of MacArthur Park by investing financial and human capital. The situation that MacArthur Park faces (i.e., communities have taken a long time to form a BID despite certain level of interest and support) offers useful conditions to investigate the dynamics among the diverse actors involved in the formation process and the potential challenges associated with the process.

Based on the contrasting BID status, similar socioeconomic condition, and adjacent geographical location, I selected the Byzantine Latino Quarter (BLQ) for the other case study site. The BLQ formed a BID in 2003 (and started to maintain it since 2005) and has been in the process of renewing the BID since 2013. Renewing a BID requires the same procedures (e.g.,

preparing a District Plan, collecting petitions) as those involved in establishing a BID for the first time. Therefore, the BLQ BID renewal process provides a useful platform to compare and examine the MacArthur Park BID formation process. Despite the contrasting presence of BIDs, the BLQ shares similar socioeconomic characteristics with MacArthur Park; both are low-income immigrant neighborhoods. Both areas have shared signs of slow development and various social problems since the 1980s. The demographic compositions of both neighborhoods also bear much resemblance: the majority of both neighborhood residents are Latinos, however, based on my observation and the names of business and property owners appearing on the local business data, the businesses and property owners seem multiracial (ReferenceUSA, 2014). Furthermore, the BLQ is geographically adjacent to MacArthur Park. As shown in Figure 3-1, both MacArthur Park and the BLQ are located in central Los Angeles where part of their boundaries is shared. The context of each selected neighborhood will be more fully described in Chapter 4.

Figure 3-1. Existing and unidentified proposed BIDs in the City of Los Angeles, 2013



3.3 Data Collection Methods

The data of this study were collected during a year-long field research from April, 2013 to April, 2014 in Los Angeles. Three types of data—interviews, archival records and documents, and observations—were collected to understand the history of BID formation in MacArthur Park and the BLQ. I conducted semi-structured, open-ended individual interviews with those who could share experiences or insights on BID formation of the two case study sites and in Los Angeles. In addition, archival records and documents provided useful information because a major portion of this study is concerned with how the BID formation process progressed in the past. Observations of public spaces and community meetings added more information for the current condition and situation of the neighborhoods. Under each category of data collection method, I describe more details on the source of data and logistics of data collection.

Interviews

Interviews allow a researcher to draw in-depth insights into the dynamics among actors involved in the BID formation process and the decisive factors that lead to the formation. I used semi-structured and open-ended interview questions to collect information on the process of BID formation along with the condition and agendas of each neighborhood. Interviewees were selected first by identifying key persons directly involved in BID formation and community meetings. At the end of each interview, I asked them if they had any other reference to recommend for my next interviews. The snowball sampling was useful for identifying additional interviewees who had useful information on my research inquiry.

The interviewees can be categorized into four major groups: community stakeholders, community development partners, city employees, and BID consultants. Community

stakeholders include property owners, business owners, or residents of MacArthur Park and the BLQ. Community development partners include outside-community organizations, mainly the University of California, Los Angeles, Department of Urban Planning, and Los Angeles Neighborhood Imitative (LANI). City employees include the Office of the City Clerk staff, Bureau of Street Services, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, city planners, the City Council Office, and police officers. Regarding BID consultants, I interviewed those who were involved with the BID formation effort in the case study neighborhoods as well as those who acted as consultants for BID formation in other parts of Los Angeles in order to understand a diverse array of opinions and approaches regarding the ideal ways of forming BIDs. Additionally, I interviewed a number of Executive Directors of other BIDs, community organizers, developers, and homeless community advocates, all of who provided diverse perspectives on BIDs and BID formation in Los Angeles. Although their experiences were not directly concerned with the selected study areas, their insights were useful for understanding some of the similar issues that MacArthur Park and the BLQ were experiencing in terms of BID formation.

A total of 37 interviews were conducted. Most interviews were conducted in person, and several interviews were conducted through email and phone conversations. In-person interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes to one hour. Thirty one interviews were voice-recorded upon the verbal consent of interviewees. Guiding interview questions for each group of interviewees are attached in Appendix at the end of the entire document. Table 3-2 shows the detailed information of the conducted interviews, concerning the type of interview, availability of recorded files, and the neighborhood for which the interview was specifically useful.

Table 3-2. Interviews conducted during the fieldwork in Los Angeles, 2013-2014

INTERVIEWEES	TYPE	RECORDED	NEIGHBORHOOD
COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS & DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS			
Neighborhood Council, Former President	In person	Y	MacArthur Park
Mama's Hot Tamales Café, Director	In person	Y	MacArthur Park
Department of Recreation and Parks, Manager	By phone	Y	MacArthur Park
Neighborhood Council, Former staff, Resident	In person	Y	MacArthur Park
Professor, Planning at University of Oregon	By phone	N	MacArthur Park
LANI, Former staff	In person	Y	BLQ
LANI, Program Manager	In person	Y	BLQ
LANI, Intern	In person	Y	BLQ
St. Sophia Church, Fr. Bakas	In person	Y	BLQ
BLQ BID, Member, Property owner	In person	Y	BLQ
Chrysalis, Director of Business Partnerships	In person	Y	BLQ
Chrysalis, Operations Manager	In person	Y	BLQ
Professor, Urban Planning at UCLA	In person	Y	BLQ
KYCC, Environmental Services Manager	In person	Y	BLQ
CITY OFFICIALS			
Rampart Police Division, LAPD Officer 1	In person	Y	Both
Rampart Police Division, LAPD Officer 2	In person	Y	Both
Bureau of Street Services, Contact Administrator	In person	Y	Both
Department of Neighborhood Empowerment 1	In person	Y	Both
Department of Neighborhood Empowerment 2	By phone	N	Both
Office of the City Clerk, Acting Division Head	In person	Y	General
Office of the City Clerk, Special Assessment Section staff	In person	Y	General
Council District 1, Field deputy	In person	Y	Both
Council District 1, Chief of Staff	In person	Y	Both
City Planner	In person	Y	General
CRA/LA, Former staff 1	Email	N/A	MacArthur Park
CRA/LA, Former staff 2	Email	N/A	MacArthur Park
BID CONSULTANTS			
New City America, Inc., President	By phone	Y	Both
Duckworth Consulting, Principal	In person	Y	General
Urban Place Consulting Group, Inc., President	In person	Y	General
Lauren Schlau Consulting, Principal	By email	N/A	General
ADDITIONAL			
BID Executive Director 1	In person	Y	General
BID Executive Director 2	In person	Y	General
BID Executive Director 3	In person	N	General
Community organizer	In person	Y	Downtown
Developer	In person	Y	Downtown
Homeless community advocate 1	In person	Y	Downtown
Homeless community advocate 2	In person	Y	Downtown

Archival Records and Documents

The purpose of archival research was to collect background information on socioeconomic characteristics and the process of BID formation in the selected case study sites. The census data and 'Mapping L.A.' sections of the *Los Angeles Times* were used to map out demographic and economic changes in the neighborhoods. The review of media sources (mainly coverage by the *Los Angeles Times* and *Downtown News*) and the Los Angeles City Council files helped understand the history of the case study site and the trajectory of the discussions regarding the formation of a BID. In addition, the existing and newly proposed District Plans of the BLQ BID provided guidelines for BID formation and details about the information on properties inside the BID boundary.

Observations

Observations of real-life situations can add important insights on cultural atmosphere, political subtleties, and socioeconomic condition that do not implicitly or explicitly surface in the written documents. I conducted observations at two types of setting: meetings and open spaces (e.g., streets and parks). In terms of meeting observation, I audited a number of closed meetings such as BID Board meetings and BID Consortium monthly meetings in addition to a number of public meetings such as City Council Working Group, Street Vending Summit, and local community initiatives meetings. These meetings helped me learn about the most updated issues with managing public spaces in commercial districts on both the city and local levels. In terms of open space observation, I examined MacArthur Park and the BLQ from various aspects, including business characteristics, signs of deterioration (e.g., trash, graffiti), BID-related services, and the usage of open spaces. Field notes and photographs were collected during the street observations. The results enriched my understanding and narratives of the study sites.

3.4 Data analysis

Data analysis of a multiple-case study typically involves detailed descriptions of the selected cases and development of themes based on similarities and differences of those cases (Creswell, 2007). Following Creswell's template, I analyzed the collected data to draw similarities and differences between the two cases regarding neighborhood characteristics and the process of community organizing. My findings are discussed in the following two chapters: Chapter 4 analyzes local demographic, socioeconomic, cultural, and commercial characteristics of the two neighborhoods to identify similarities shared as low-income multiethnic immigrant neighborhoods. In Chapter 5, I focus on the history of BID formation in the two neighborhoods. First I discuss the types of common struggles that MacArthur Park and the BLQ both face as low-income immigrant neighborhoods; then I examine the contrasting trajectory of the BID formation in these neighborhoods with respect to the characteristics of community organizing. Based on my findings, I focused on the source of leadership, organizational resources, functionality of neighborhood councils, and attitudes towards multi-ethnicity.

The collected data were analyzed as follows. First, interviews with various individuals helped to cross-examine the historical facts and the relationship among key agents involved in the BID formation efforts. The stories shared by interviewees helped to understand the actual progress of BID formation in each neighborhood, which was not clearly revealed in written documents. Interviews also helped to form important points of reference for comparison when interviewees shared common opinions on the similarities or differences between MacArthur Park and the BLQ in terms of neighborhood characteristics and the process of community organizing. In addition, archival records and documents provided articles, statistics, or photos that support the information gathered through interviews. Last, my observations of

neighborhood condition or internal dynamics of community stakeholders helped to examine the most recent aspects of each neighborhood.

Chapter 4

MacArthur Park and the Byzantine Latino Quarter

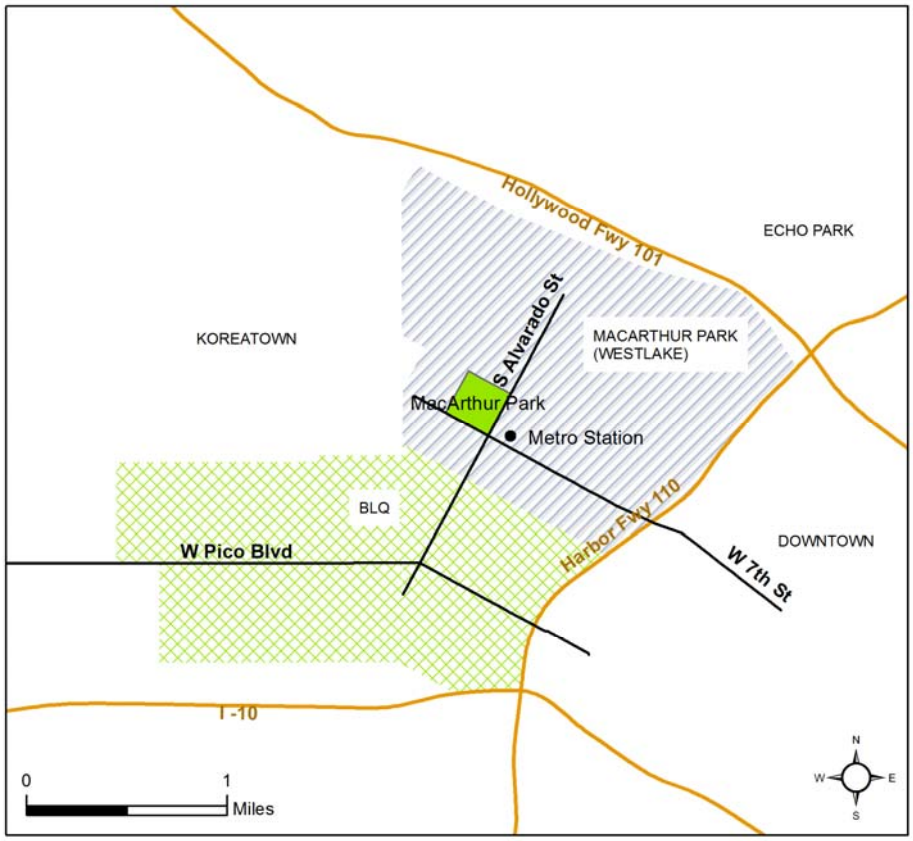
The sites for this study—MacArthur Park and the Byzantine Latino Quarter (BLQ)—are dense immigrant low-income communities located in Central Los Angeles, California. Despite the shared resemblances, the BID formation history diverged in these two neighborhoods. The following sections describe the geographical boundaries, brief history of neighborhood formation, ethnic and economic characteristics, and social challenges of MacArthur Park and the BLQ. Collectively, these will help us understand the condition and comparative context of the commercial areas in the two study sites.

4.1 Geography

MacArthur Park and the BLQ are adjacent, flanked by Koreatown to the northwest and downtown to the east. The geographical adjacency allows these two neighborhoods to share boundaries for various government jurisdictions and initiatives. Politically both MacArthur Park and the BLQ belong to the City Council District 1, which has historically represented poorer and immigrant-concentrated neighborhoods compared to other Council Districts in Los Angeles (Field Deputy of the City Council District 1, personal communication, December 20, 2013). MacArthur Park and the BLQ are also under the same police division. Furthermore, both

MacArthur Park and the BLQ are part of the Promise Zones,[11] a recent Federal revitalization initiative for high-poverty communities across the country (Karlamangla, 2014; "Promise Zones," 2014). Figure 4-1 presents the boundaries of MacArthur Park and the BLQ, on which I conducted demographic analyses for this dissertation. The map also marks the major commercial corridors in each neighborhood: Pico Boulevard in the BLQ and Alvarado and 7th Streets in MacArthur Park.

Figure 4-1. Boundaries and major commercial corridors of MacArthur Park and the BLQ



[11] Los Angeles is one of the five communities designated as Promise Zones in January, 2014. The Obama Administration plans to designate 15 more communities over the next three years. Promise Zones will receive benefits including: federal assistance to navigate federal funding and programs and tax incentives for hiring local residents and investing in businesses. The term of Promise Zone designation is 10 years, and it can be extended as necessary if the tax incentives are enacted ("Promise Zones," 2014). The Los Angeles Promise Zone includes the neighborhoods of Pico-Union, Westlake, Koreatown, Hollywood, and East Hollywood. The focus of the Los Angeles Promise zone is on increasing housing affordability, ensuring a high-quality education and career and technical training opportunities for youth, investing in transit infrastructure, and eliminating wasteful and duplicative government programs ("Fact Sheet: President Obama's Promise Zones Initiative," 2014).

While MacArthur Park and the BLQ own a distinctive identity as a neighborhood, the title and the boundary of these neighborhoods contain certain degrees of ambiguity. Many neighborhoods in Los Angeles have more than one title and multiple versions of demarcation depending on the source of the information. These sources of information include, but are not limited to, the Council Districts, the Los Angeles Police Department, the *Los Angeles Times* "Mapping Los Angeles," Neighborhood Councils, former Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) definitions, independent cartographers, and local residents. Particularly, the boundaries of neighborhoods with recent immigrants are more ambiguous due to fluctuating demography and the ongoing attempts of immigrants to create new communities. While the historical identity of a neighborhood is retained after older generations of immigrants move out, the boundaries and the identities of the neighborhood evolve as new groups of immigrants settle in. In addition, the boundaries of a neighborhood may also change when the city government or community organizations decide to revitalize (the image of) certain areas by changing the names of the neighborhoods.

For these reasons, the areas I refer to as "MacArthur Park" and the "BLQ" could have other names and slightly different boundaries according to different sources. In the case of MacArthur Park, the neighborhood is also known by many as Westlake. In fact the Metro station on Alvarado Street and Wilshire Boulevard includes both names, called "Westlake/MacArthur Park," because "Westlake Park" changed its name to "MacArthur Park" in 1942 ("It's Gen. MacArthur," 1942). In this study I use the name "MacArthur Park" because that name resonates with residents according to both my personal encounters with the locals and also according to the comments section of the *Los Angeles Times Mapping L.A.,* where residents share their sentiments of the neighborhood. One resident, Scott M. commented:

> The first thing I noticed when I moved here was that anytime I say "Westlake," most people think I'm talking about Westlake Village, a suburb of LA. So now I just say I live next to MacArthur Park, which everybody knows. (Scott M. 2009)

Resident Eddie Boquilla (2009) raised a similar question about labeling the neighborhood and noted:

> "Westlake," sounds great but it's not MacArthur Park. Los Angeles natives will go by MacArthur Park because of its socio-economic and historical significance to many families that have traveled through this shadow land under the business towers of Downtown, Los Angeles. (Boquilla 2009)

Furthermore, the record of the Office of the City Clerk also uses "MacArthur Park" to note one of the areas that proposed to establish a business improvement district (BID).

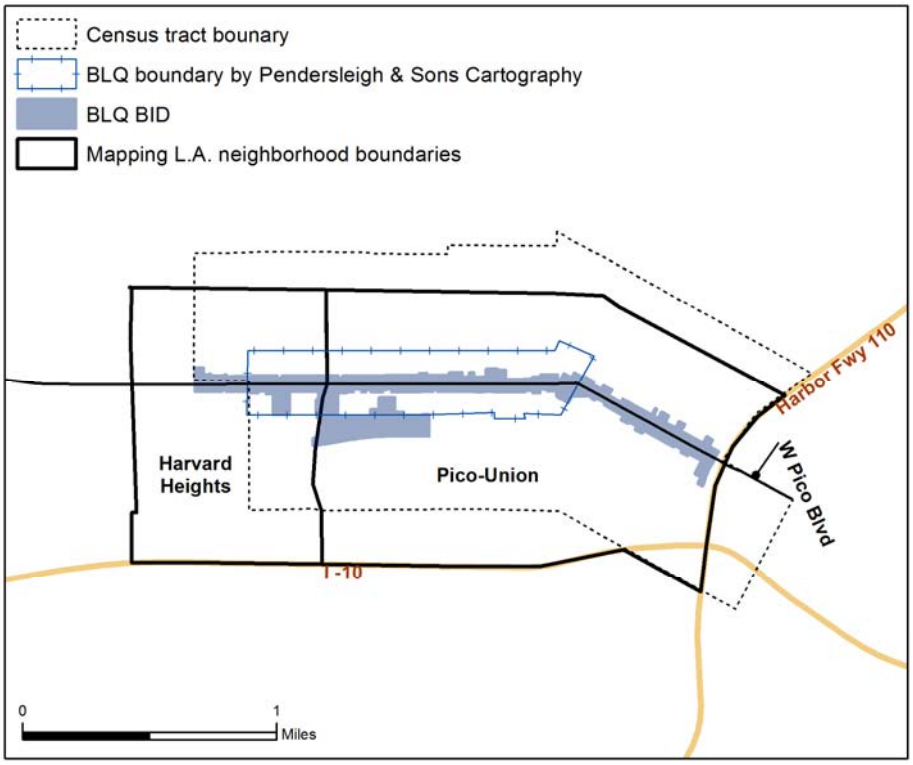
For most purposes of this study, the boundaries of MacArthur Park correspond identically to the General Plan of the City of Los Angeles (specifically, Westlake Community Plan) as of October, 2010, which is the boundary shown in Figure 4-1. This boundary includes the northeast corner of the neighborhood with straight lines on the east and west sides whereas the boundary of Westlake/MacArthur Park defined by the *Los Angeles Times Mapping L.A.* does not include the northeast corner of the neighborhood but assigns that portion to Echo Park. The Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles (CRA/LA) Westlake Recovery Redevelopment Project map (2008) [Figure 4-2] shows a similar boundary to the study area but with slightly zigzagged boundaries on the east and west sides of the neighborhood.

Figure 4-2. Westlake Recovery Redevelopment Project area by the former Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles, 2008

The area currently known as the Byzantine Latino Quarter (BLQ) could also be perceived with some ambiguity. The area was once called Pico Heights until it was merged to the larger Pico-Union district by the Los Angeles Planning Department in the 1970s. During this time, the neighborhood's progressive deterioration gave the name "Pico-Union" a negative image and reputation during the 1980s and 1990s. In the late 1990s, the local religious leaders and a non-profit organization, the Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative (LANI), renamed part of the neighborhood to "Byzantine Latino Quarter" to promote a new identity and character to the area (Kotkin, 1997; Loukaitou-Sideris, 2000). The name *Byzantine Latino Quarter* celebrates the area's ethnic diversity, particularly the predominant Latino presence and the Greek/Byzantine history of the neighborhood's past.

The history of the name change contributes to the coexistence of multiple names and boundaries of the BLQ. Some influential cartographers and urban researchers define the BLQ as the area that straddles the larger neighborhoods of Pico-Union and Harvard Heights, which is centered along Pico Boulevard between South Hobart Boulevard to the west and South Alvarado Boulevard to the east. Alternatively, the BLQ could simply mean the surrounding areas of the BLQ BID, which is the main commercial corridor along Pico Boulevard between Western Avenue to the west and the Highway 101 to the east. Figure 4-3 outlines the various possible boundaries of the BLQ. The boundary definition that I use in this study corresponds to that of the census tract (dotted line in Figure 4-3) because it covers the surrounding neighborhood area of where the BLQ BID is located.

Figure 4-3. Multiple possibilities to situate the Byzantine Latino Quarter (BLQ)



In this study I will use the term "BLQ" when describing the study site given that the central geographical focus of this dissertation concerns commercial areas which have a BID named after the BLQ. However, I want to acknowledge that the BLQ could mean only a portion of the large area referred to as the Pico-Union by many residents and the public. Therefore, I use "Pico-Union" to describe the historical background of the site before the name "BLQ" was created. I also want to add that the combined area of MacArthur Park and the BLQ can be referred to as "Rampart" or "Westlake" or "Pico-Union" depending on the source of information.

4.2 From Fashionable Suburbs to Poorer Immigrants' Gateway Communities

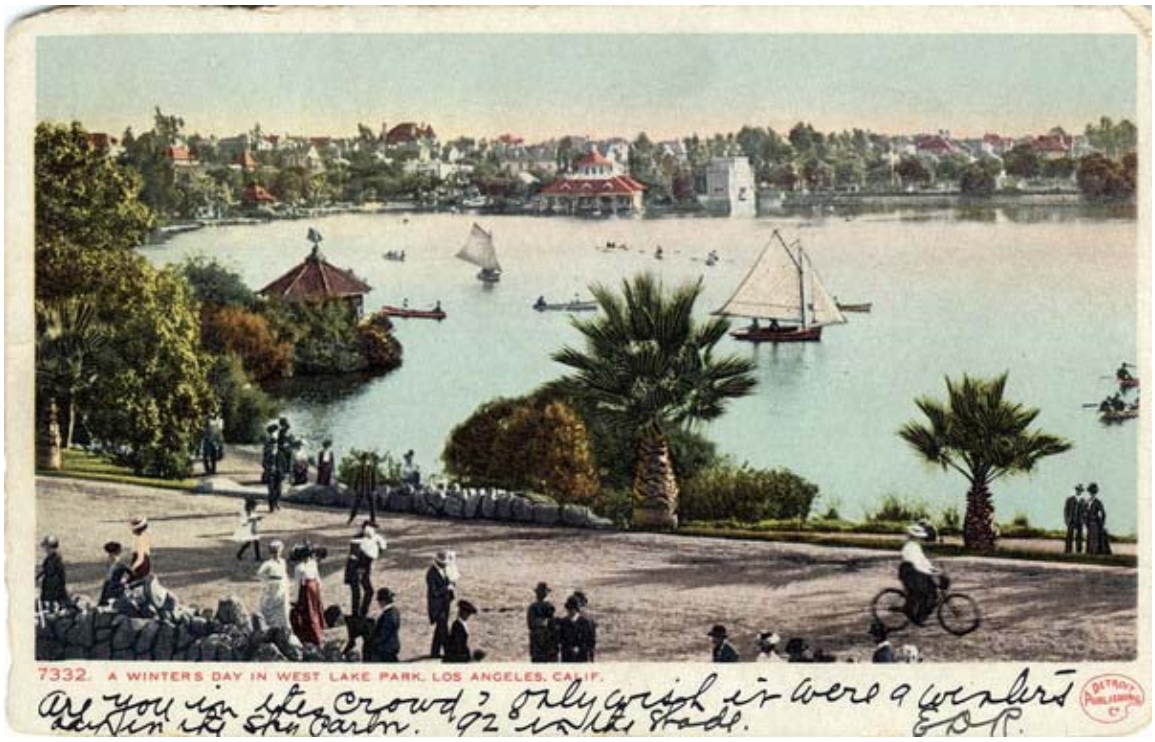
MacArthur Park and the BLQ have similar trajectories of neighborhood formation; both were once wealthy white neighborhoods and are now immigrant gateway communities. Collectively, this area, known as the Westlake District, was originally developed as a fashionable suburb

between 1880 and 1930 (Los Angeles Conservancy, 2009) and was "once mostly Anglo [White] office workers and retail salespersons" (Vigil, 2002, p.131). Early settlers of Pico-Union were a diverse group of Europeans, including middle and upper-income "Greeks, Norwegians, Swedes, Welsh, and Russian Jews" (Loukaitou-Sideris, 2000, p. 17). MacArthur Park itself (formerly "Westlake Park") was where people enjoyed social activities and modern art. The park became "the most popular open-air resort in the city" by 1894 since it was open to public in 1890 (Masters, 2013). Belle Sumner Angier of the *Los Angeles Times* wrote in 1903:

> Of all the parks in Los Angeles, there is none better loved by the people than Westlake, and on special occasions, as at the Sunday afternoon concerts, it is not unusual to see 10,000 people gathered about the lake, strolling about the walks and drives, or enjoying a boat ride.

The scenery of the old time MacArthur Park is captured in Figure 4-4.

Figure 4-4. Postcard of Westlake Park (1909)



Courtesy of the Werner Von Boltenstern Postcard Collection, Department of Archives and Special Collections, Loyola Marymount University Library.

Although the opulent atmosphere is gone, vestiges of the old times appear from place to place. Particularly, Pico-Union and Harvard Heights were approved by the city as Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZs) to preserve old architecture. Pico-Union possesses "late 19th century Victorian-era cottages, early 20th century Craftsman and Mission Revival bungalows and larger homes in Period Revival or Classical styles…designed by known architects and builders of the period" ("Pico-Union," n.d.). Harvard Heights preserves two-story Craftsman-style residences built from 1902 to 1908" ("Harvard Heights," n.d.). However, some old structures no longer serve their original purposes. The boathouse in MacArthur Park is barricaded, awaiting removal. The boat operation has halted due to aging facilities and financial deficits (Abdollah, 2007). The Westlake Theatre, as shown in Figure 4-5, is a symbolic architecture built in 1926 and was closed in 1991 as a theatre (*Cultural Heritage Commission Recommendation Report*, 2009). Since then part of the building was used to house a swap meet for nearly two decades until the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) purchased the building in 2008. The CRA was preparing a plan to convert the building into a multi-use entertainment venue, but the plan has come to nothing due to the dissolution of the CRA in 2012. Now the theatre is completely closed.

Figure 4-5. The Westlake Theatre with an original steel-frame, 685 S Alvarado Street

Photo by Creative Commons.

The ethnic composition of these neighborhoods started shifting with the advent of railroads and trolleys in the 1880s and 1890s, which connected the central city to the beaches. Many old residents moved west by the 1940s (Hamilton & Chinchilla, 2001). The demography soon changed when white flight took place and as the working class, typically Mexican migrants, populated the area in the 1950s and 1960s (Vigil, 2002). Accordingly, the condition of the living space in the area became rundown. Many of the large old houses were converted into multiple dwellings as "landlords kept subdividing the units and renting them out to accommodate ever-larger numbers of immigrant families" (Hutchinson & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2001, p.297).

Furthermore, the migration of thousands of Central American immigrants and refugees into MacArthur Park and Pico-Union in the late 1970s and early 1980s consolidated their identity as lower-income immigrant neighborhoods. The number of poor or working-class Salvadorans or Guatemalans substantially increased due to political instability and economic struggles in their home countries. Hamilton and Chinchilla (2001) provide a historical background of the current ethnic mix of Mexicans, Salvadorans, and Guatemalans in MacArthur Park as follows:

> For many Salvadorans and Guatemalans who arrived in the 1980s, coming to Los Angeles was a shattering experience. The newcomers tended to settle in the poorer, predominantly Mexican neighborhoods, where they could take advantage of low rents and proximity to jobs as well as a common language and the cultural familiarity of a Latino community. Many went to Westlake, a traditional immigrant entry area directly west of downtown Los Angeles, where those with romantic visions of "El Norte"[12] confronted the gritty reality of deteriorating housing and increasing crime and delinquency. (Hamilton and Chinchilla, 2001)

Pico-Union, the area around the BLQ, has also attracted similar groups of immigrants because the area was designated by the federal government as a receiving community for thousands of Central American refugees (Watanabe, 2009). Soon MacArthur Park and Pico-Union became "the Ellis Island of Los Angeles" and "Little Central America" (Andersen, 1983; Brightwell, 2013; Furlillo, 1985). In 1985, the estimated number of illegal immigrants was 50,000 in the area under the jurisdiction of the Rampart police division, which includes MacArthur Park, Pico-Union, part of Koreatown, and parts of a few other neighborhoods to the north (Furlillo, 1985).

MacArthur Park and the BLQ still are home for many recently arrived immigrants from Central America. According to the Census data, both MacArthur Park and the BLQ contain more than 1.5 times higher percentages of foreign-born populations relative to the City of Los Angeles in 2000 and 2007-2011 as shown in Table 4-1. Among the foreign-born populations, immigrants

[12] El Norte is a film (1983) that depicts a life of a Guatemalan family in the early 1980s. The main plot involves the arduous journey of two indigenous Mayan youth (a brother and a sister) heading north, fleeing from their hometown to Mexico, and to Los Angeles, California in the United States.

from Latin America are highly concentrated in these areas: on average, 75% of the foreign-born residents are from Latin America, and 20% of them from Asia, with a minute representation from other regions of origin as shown in Table 4-2.

Table 4-1. Percentage of foreign-born residents in MacArthur Park, the BLQ, and City of Los Angeles, 2000 and 2007-2011

Foreign-born (%)	MacArthur Park	BLQ	City of Los Angeles
2007-2011	62.81 (± 6.41)	62.68 (± 6.3)	39.4 (± 0.2)
2000	67.78	65.39	40.9

Source: 2000 Decennial Census SF3 and 2007-2011 American Community Survey.

Table 4-2. Region of birth among foreign-born populations in MacArthur Park, the BLQ, and City of Los Angeles, 2007-2011

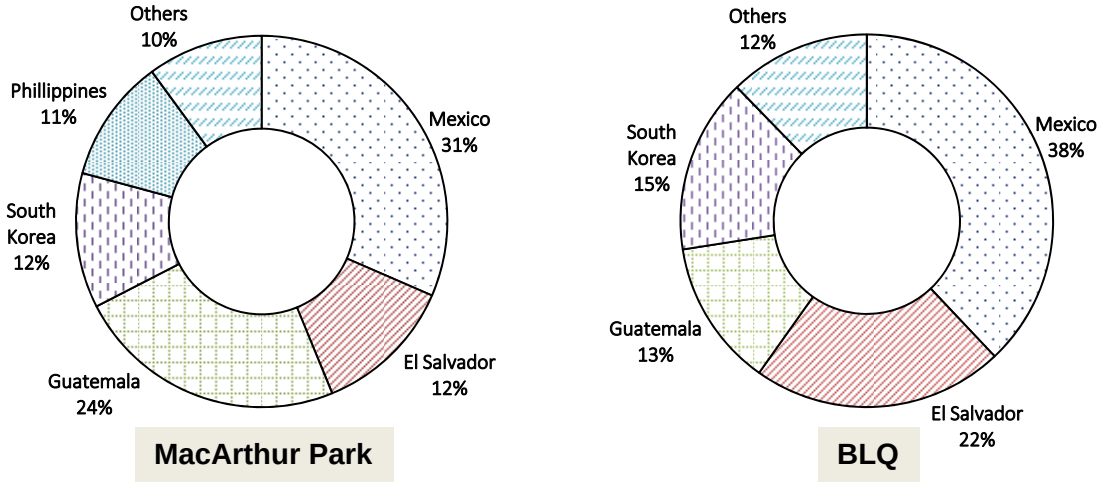
Region of Birth (%)	MacArthur Park	BLQ	City of Los Angeles
Europe	1.1	0.7	6.3
Asia	24.6	17.6	28.1
Africa	0.6	0.8	1.6
Oceania	0.08	0.02	0.4
Latin America	73.5	80.8	62.7
Northern America	0.2	0.1	0.1
Total foreign-born	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey.
Note: The numbers represent the average of all the census tracts that belong to each area. The margins of error based on a 90 percent confidence level are not presented in the table.

The percentage of recent immigrants and non-citizens in MacArthur Park and the BLQ are slightly higher than the city average. According to 2007-2011 American Community Survey, the percentages of the foreign-born populations that entered the United States in 2000 or later were 38% in MacArthur Park and 33% in the BLQ while the corresponding value was 27% for the city average. And according to the same data, about 75% of the foreign-born in both study sites were not U.S. citizens while the city average was 60%.

The ethnic breakdown of the foreign-born is similar in both neighborhoods. Figure 4-6 indicates that Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Korea represent the four largest countries of origin. In the overall view, Mexican residents consists of approximately 1/3, El Salvadorans and Guatemalans combined consists of another 1/3, and Koreans and other ethnic groups make up the remaining 1/3 of the entire ethnic groups. The proximity to Koreatown probably contributes to Koreans being the fourth largest ethnic group, which comprises slightly more than 10% of the foreign-born in both neighborhoods. The main difference between the two neighborhoods is the presence of immigrants from the Philippines: In MacArthur Park, Filipinos make up close to the same percentage of immigrants from South Korea, whereas their presence is less than 1.3% in the BLQ. The high concentration of Filipinos in MacArthur Park is probably related to the fact that Historic Filipino town is adjacent to MacArthur Park.

Figure 4-6. Major ethnic groups among the foreign-born in MacArthur Park and the BLQ, 2007-2011



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey.

Overall, the current ethnic mix shows that these two neighborhoods, while mostly Latino, are nevertheless multiethnic. The murals in Figure 4-7 reflect the multiethnic composition of the residents and multicultural vision for the communities.

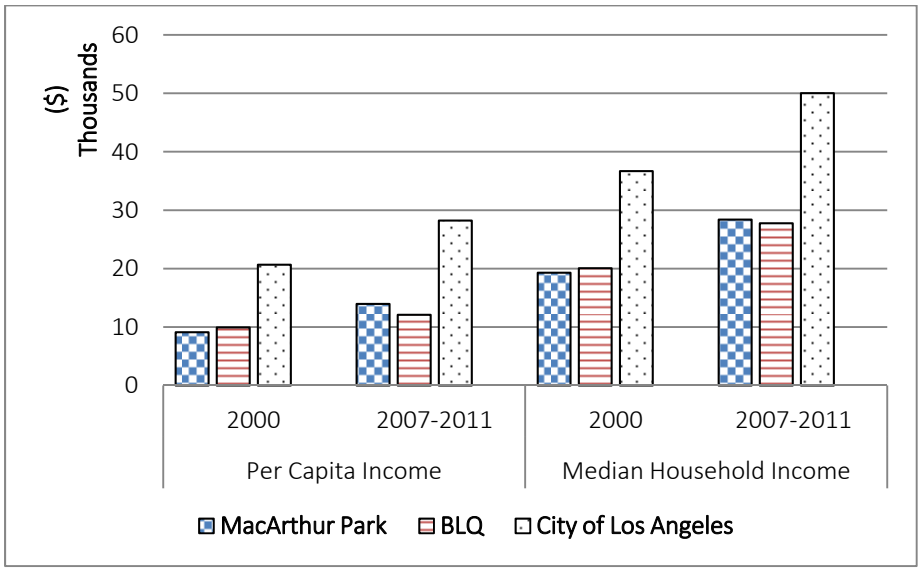
Figure 4-7. Murals that reflect multiethnic aspects of MacArthur Park and the BLQ

Top: 7th Street, across the MacArthur Park. Mural by John Zender Estrada. Title: Our Vision for Westlake/MacArthur Park in 2020. Photo by author (2013).
Bottom: 2005 W. Pico Boulevard mural. Photo courtesy Los Angeles Conservancy (2009).

In terms of the income level, MacArthur Park and the BLQ are two of the poorest neighborhoods in the city. The income disparity between the study areas and the average of Los Angeles is shown clearly in Figure 4-8. The differences in per capital income and in median

household income between the average of Los Angeles and the study areas range from $10,000 to $15,000.

Figure 4-8. Income level for MacArthur Park, the BLQ, and the City of Los Angeles



Source: 2000 Decennial Census SF3 and 2007-2011 American Community Survey.

Percentages of the population below the poverty level also show a gap between the study sites and the city average. In 1999, 41.5% and 38.3% of individuals in MacArthur Park and the BLQ, respectively, were below the poverty level, while 22.1% of individuals were below the poverty level in Los Angeles on average (U. S. Census Bureau, 2000; 2007-2011). The 2007-2011 American Community Survey shows that 36.7% and 32.3% of individuals in MacArthur Park and the BLQ, respectively, were below the poverty level, while 20.2% of individuals were below the poverty level in Los Angeles on average (U. S. Census Bureau, 2000; 2007-2011). Although the percentages of individuals below the poverty level decreased overall compared to the 2000 Census, approximately 1 out of 3 residents in MacArthur Park and the BLQ are still under the poverty level.

4.3 Commercial Areas

Commercial areas in MacArthur Park and the BLQ mostly comprise small businesses in terms of sales and employee size. Table 4-3 summarizes the sales and employee size of local businesses in MacArthur Park and Pico-Union[13] in comparison to the city average of Los Angeles and the neighborhoods that have BIDs.

Table 4-3. Sales and employee size of businesses in MacArthur Park and Pico-Union, 2014

	MacArthur Park		Pico-Union		Los Angeles City Average		Areas with BIDs	
By Sales	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**
Less than $500,000	400	39.2	569	43.0	48,245	40.5	17,679	40.6
$500,000 - 1 Million	266	26.1	264	20.0	26,506	22.3	10,558	24.2
$ 1 - 2.5 Million	111	10.9	149	11.3	13,712	11.5	5,055	11.6
$ 2.5 - 5 Million	27	2.6	55	4.2	5,372	4.5	1,986	4.6
$ 5 - 10 Million	25	2.5	48	3.6	4,980	4.2	1,969	4.5
Over $ 10 Million	16	1.6	49	3.7	4,177	3.5	1,582	3.6
Missing entries	175	17.2	188	14.2	16,136	13.5	4,739	10.9
Total Count	1,020	100	1,322	100	119,128	100	43,568	100
By Employee Size	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**
1-4	747	73.2	898	67.9	81,912	68.8	30,793	70.7
5-9	143	14.0	209	15.8	17,617	14.8	6,083	14.0
10-19	58	5.7	84	6.4	7,899	6.6	2,714	6.2
20-49	19	1.9	51	3.9	4,798	4.0	1,665	3.8
Over 50	15	1.5	29	2.2	3,002	2.5	1,040	2.4
Missing entries	38	3.7	51	3.9	3,900	3.3	1,273	2.9
Total Count	1,020	100	1,322	100	119,128	100	43,568	100

Source: "U.S. Businesses," ReferenceUSA (2014).
Note: Due to the limitation in the amount of data that can be downloaded, I narrowed my selection for "the areas with BIDs" to neighborhoods with property-BIDs only and not merchant-BIDs. The neighborhoods included in the analysis are Brentwood, Canoga Park, Central City east, Chinatown, Downtown, East Hollywood, Encino, Granada Hills, Highland Park, Hollywood Studio District, Larchmont, Leimar Park, Panorama City, Pico-Union, Sherman Oaks, South Park, Studio City, Tarzana, Westchester, and Westwood Village.

[13] The local businesses represented in Table 4-3 and 4-4 are analyzed at a neighborhood level defined by ReferenceUSA. I narrowed down the geographical search to "MacArthur Park" and "Pico-Union" which represent the neighborhoods that are closest to my study areas. Therefore, the businesses analyzed in Table 4-3 and 4-4 include not only the ones that would make up a BID but also those outside the BID boundaries.

According to Table 4-3, around 40 percent of the local businesses make less than $500,000 sales per year, and around 70 percent of the local businesses have employees size of between 1 and 4 in both MacArthur Park and Pico-Union. The percentage of sales and employee size for each category is overall similar across the four areas that were compared. The only noticeable difference is that MacArthur Park shows a low percentage of businesses with high sales (e.g., over $2.5 Million, especially over $10 Million) or with a large number of employees (e.g., over 20 employees) compared to Pico-Union, the city average, and the areas with BIDs.

MacArthur Park and Pico-Union overall show similar types of businesses based on the analysis of popular types of businesses categorized by the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes. Table 4-4 summarizes the ten most popular types of businesses in both neighborhoods in comparison to all areas with BIDs and Koreatown, which shares neighborhood boundaries with MacArthur Park and Pico-Union. The common types of businesses in MacArthur Park and Pico-Union include Health Services, Eating and Drinking Places, Miscellaneous Retail, Personal Services, Food Stores, Real Estate, and Membership Organizations. A comparison of the top ten business types in MacArthur Park and Pico-Union show that Social Services and Wholesale Trade of Durable Goods are unique to MacArthur Park and Pico-Union, respectively. MacArthur Park and Pico-Union distinguish themselves from the neighborhoods with BIDs and Koreatown by the presence of membership organizations; MacArthur Park and Pico-Union have 25 and 34 churches respectively. Compared to these two neighborhoods, the areas with BIDs and Koreatown have relatively high presence of businesses that provide Legal Services and Engineering, Accounting, Research, and Management related services.

Table 4-4. Top 10 popular types of businesses in MacArthur Park and Pico-Union by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) categories, 2014

MacArthur Park			Pico-Union		
SIC categories	**Count**	**%**	**SIC categories**	**Count**	**%**
Health Services[a]	185	18.1	Miscellaneous Retail	100	7.6
Real Estate	80	7.8	Health Services	99	7.5
Personal Services[b]	59	5.8	Eating and Drinking Places	98	7.4
Eating and Drinking Places	52	5.1	Personal Services	87	6.6
Miscellaneous Retail	50	4.9	Wholesale Trade - Durable Goods	73	5.5
Food Stores	44	4.3	Food Stores	71	5.4
Nonclassifiable Establishments	42	4.1	Business Services	47	3.6
Social Services[c]	41	4.0	Real Estate	46	3.5
Business Services[d]	38	3.7	Nonclassifiable Establishments	45	3.4
Membership Organizations	37	3.6	Membership Organizations	40	3.0

Neighborhoods with BIDs			Koreatown		
SIC categories	**Count**	**%**	**SIC categories**	**Count**	**%**
Health Services	7,336	16.8	Legal Services	783	12.6
Legal Services	3,456	7.9	Health Services	690	11.1
Miscellaneous Retail	2,388	5.5	Eating and Drinking Places	464	7.4
Eating and Drinking Places	2,125	4.9	Engineering, Accounting, Research, Management	443	7.1
Business Services	2,054	4.7	Business Services	357	5.7
Engineering, Accounting, Research, Management	2,020	4.6	Real Estate	352	5.7
Personal Services	2,014	4.6	Personal Services	336	5.4
Real Estate	1,779	4.1	Miscellaneous Retail	265	4.3
Apparel and Accessory Stores	1,603	3.7	Nonclassifiable Establishments	223	3.6
Nonclassifiable Establishments	1,551	3.6	Insurance, Brokers and Service	179	2.9

Source: "U.S. Businesses," ReferenceUSA (2014).

[a] The dominance of Health Services in MacArthur Park can be attributed to the presence of two general hospitals: Good Samaritan Hospital and St. Vincent Medical Center.

[b] Personal Services include businesses such as laundries, drycleaning, tailor shops, photographic studios, beauty shops, hairdressers, repair shops, and personal document and information services.

[c] Social Services include businesses such as individual and family services, geriatrics social service, child care, crisis center, counseling, community center, public welfare, social worker, refugee service, and job training.

[d] Business Services include business such as advertising, mailing, lettering, reservation, employment, equipment rental, and radio, television, publisher representatives.

According to my windshield and on-foot observations, both MacArthur Park and Pico-Union show heavy presence of Latino businesses and customers. While many businesses in both

districts only show Spanish signs, businesses in the BLQ reflect more cultural diversity through Greek, Latino, and Korean shops and restaurants. Figure 4-9 and 4-10 show some examples of the businesses that demonstrate the multiethnic characteristics of each commercial district.

Figure 4-9. Ethnic businesses in MacArthur Park

Photos by author (2013).

Figure 4-10. Ethnic businesses in the BLQ

Photos by author (2013).

MacArthur Park and the BLQ have been slow in redevelopment and gentrification, trends characteristic for downtown and neighborhoods nearby downtown including Koreatown, Echo Park, Silver Lake, and Los Feliz. Adrian Glick Kudler, a four-year resident two blocks away from MacArthur Park, contrasted the development status of MacArthur Park to Echo Park, one of the adjacent neighborhoods that has been developed in recent years. In her article on *Curbed Los Angeles*, Kudler (2013) wrote:

> Echo Park is right down Alvarado Street; comparatively, however, it's world away. The ongoing gentrification of that once-working-class neighborhood can only be described as reverse white flight: Hundreds (thousands?) of hipsters have swooped in like Thirsty Crows, opened their bistros and boutiques, increased rents, and forced out families who have lived there for generations. They've used white privilege as eminent domain, their mission being to fill a miniature Chavez Ravine with artisanal cocktails and 180-gram Vinyl. This is not the case in my neighborhood. How ungentrified is Westlake? Let me put it this way: there's no Starbucks. There isn't even a Peet's, for Christ's sake. The most bourgeois eatery we have is Subway—a veritable oasis in a food desert otherwise populated by McDonald's and corner markets—and even that's a recent addition.

Kudler's description of ungentrified MacArthur Park is vivid and accurate. The real estate prospect also echoes Kudler's view on this neighborhood. Moses Kagan (2012), a real estate developer, in his blog entry "Why Westlake won't gentrify," pointed out three reasons that are impeding gentrification of the neighborhood, namely the old housing stock, the high density of apartments, and rent control.

The slow change of the neighborhood is a common pattern in the BLQ. While the slow change of the neighborhoods can mean a form of stability or "immigrants' milieu" as Sandoval (2012) interpreted in the case of MacArthur Park, from the perspective of people who aspire to implement new changes through economic development and clean up, the change has been too slow. One property owner in the BLQ said "I had this property for 30 years. Not too much has happened. Not too much has changed. Very slow, very slow, very slow improvement." At one of

the property owners' meetings, one Korean property owner raised a similar question, "We see developments on Wilshire and Olympic [boulevards a few blocks north in Koreatown]. Why has so little development been on Pico?"

The high concentration of recent immigrants and slow development may also be related to the prevalence of informal economic activities in these neighborhoods. Informal economic pursuits could be the only choice to gain economic benefits for immigrants who would not otherwise have access to jobs in the formal economy (Ochoa & Ochoa, 2005). Merchants who sell illegal items and street vending are concentrated in MacArthur Park.[14] MacArthur Park has been known as a place to get fake IDs (Sandoval, 2010). Vending of food and convenience items has also been common on Alvarado and 7th Streets as captured in Figure 4-11. While vending is prohibited by the city ordinance in general, MacArthur Park has unique history of having the first legal "sidewalk vending district" between 1999 and 2005, which allowed immigrants to own and do business with licensed vending carts in a designated area on 7th Street (Ha, 1999). Although the effort to maintain the Vending District dissolved due to a lack of funding and low profits (S. Romero, personal communication, November 20, 2013), there are still many vendors in MacArthur Park who run business illegally; the peak of vendor activities start from Friday afternoons and continue to fill up the streets over the weekend.

[14] Vendors are not as much concentrated on Pico Boulevard as in MacArthur Park.

Figure 4-11. Vendors in MacArthur Park

Photo by Author (2014).

In terms of street life, commercial areas in MacArthur Park (especially Alvarado Street) usually show a high amount of foot traffic compared to Pico Boulevard in the BLQ. The crowdedness, first of all, should be attributed to the high density of housing and populations in MacArthur Park. There are 38,214 people per square mile in MacArthur Park relative to 25,352 people per square mile in Pico-Union according to the *Los Angeles Times Mapping L.A*. The existence of the park, the metro station, and street vendors also attracts foot traffic and thus creates greater density on Alvarado and 7th Streets compared to long-spread-out Pico Boulevard. In MacArthur Park, the sense of density currently functions in both ways: it gives off a sense of vibrancy and suggests a glimpse of possibility of future redevelopment (or gentrification) into a walkable commercial district, but it also creates some sense of irregularity due to the heavy presence of street vendors, pedestrians, and a seemingly uncontrollable amount of trash. Comparatively, Pico Boulevard seems less crowded and cleaner.

4.4 Social Problems

Some of the challenges that MacArthur Park and the BLQ face in implementing neighborhood development and improvement efforts are rooted in the social ills that have existed in the neighborhoods for the last few decades. During the 1980s, MacArthur Park and Pico-Union were neighborhoods to avoid. Both neighborhoods were notorious for drug dealing and other crimes. In 1989, the Rampart Police Division, which encompasses MacArthur Park and Pico-Union districts, reported the most dramatic increase in major offenses from the previous years (Kendall, 1989). A newspaper article pointed out the potential correlation between the increased homicides and drug activity. In another article in the *Los Angeles Times* in 1990, Pico-Union was depicted as an area in which old Victorian Bed & Breakfasts coexisted with deteriorating surroundings, struggling against increasing crime and negative public reputations. Pool (1990) notes:

> [P]ico-Union—six blocks south of drug-plagued MacArthur Park—has earned the reputation as one of the toughest neighborhoods in Los Angeles.
>
> Spray-painted gang slogans cover the brick walls of an abandoned storefront at the end of Alvarado Terrace. Graffiti obscures signs that identify the street as a cultural monument. One of the vandalized signs dangles upside down on its post.
>
> Discarded mattresses and broken furniture litter sidewalks on adjoining side streets. Hulks of automobiles are sometimes left stripped in the street in front of tiny Terrace Park, across from the mansions. Crack users huddle in doorways along nearby Pico Boulevard.

Many of these problems are inextricably linked to the presence of gangs. The Pico-Union area became the gang hotspot of Los Angeles by the mid-1990s, particularly with two of the most active Hispanic gangs, 18th Street and MS-13 (MS stands for "Mara Salvatrucha) (Vigil, 2002). Vigil (2002), in his book, *A Rainbow of Gangs*, describes how and why gang activity has been a plausible option for many immigrant youth; a shortage of schools and teachers, lack of role models, pressure to grow up, dissatisfaction about the disparity in the

society, and the high profit that they could make compared to legal jobs drive many young Salvadorans to the streets. Vigil (2002) notes, "[A]n estimated 2 to 10 percent of the Salvadoran community's youth formed gangs of their own, such as Mara Salvatrucha, or joined existing gangs, in particular 18th Street, which emerged in the Pico-Union area in the 1960s (p.141)" and "There are now [as of 2002] more than thirty gangs operating within the eight square miles that comprise Pico-Union (p.142)."

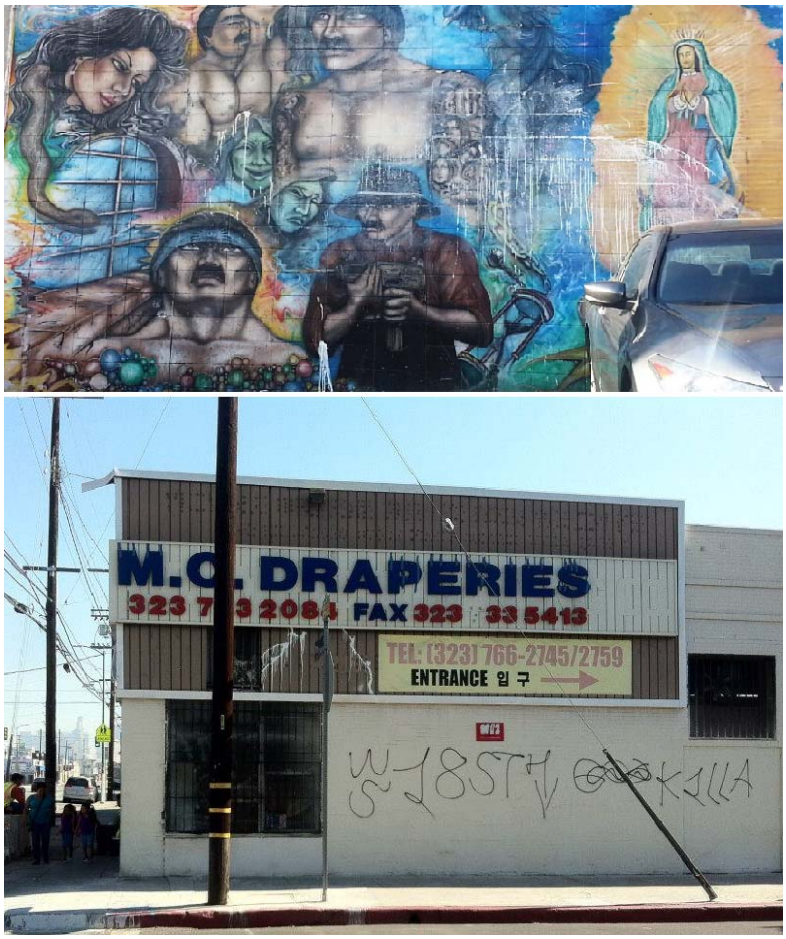
The presence of gang and its associated problems have created a hostile environment for businesses. "It [crime] hurts the local economic vibrancy," said Father Bakas at the Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Church who was a strong advocate for starting a business improvement district (BID) in Pico-Union in the early 2000s. The territorial practice of the gangs (e.g., graffiti, conflict over the control of particular areas) has caused fear and irritation in the community. The Saint Sophia Cathedral bulletin describes the situation in the 1990s in this way:

> The surrounding businesses were in a state of severe degeneration. The various business signage was often little more than a bit of writing, spray-painted on an old, rotting piece of plywood. The area looked like a third-world country. The extent and offensiveness of graffiti was so oppressive that people were disheartened each time they entered the area. Drug dealing was epidemic throughout the neighborhood…There was a glut of drive-by shootings at a number of the neighborhood business, including *Dino's Chicken & Burgers* up Pico Blvd. All the local businesses had to close up by 5PM. *Papa Cristo's* [a historic Greek restaurant that started business in 1948] across the street, began considering packing up and moving away into Orange County…The "Club Latino" bar that was located across the street, would exploit St Sophia's open parking lot at night to park Winnebago RVs for use in its prostitution activities. (Boyd, n.d.)

Father Bakas' reminiscence reveals how the local businesses and even faith organizations suffered as a result of the dominant presence of gangs and crimes. Public displays of the gang territorialization still remain in these neighborhoods as shown in Figure 4-12. The problems with the gang activities did not end within the community but also tainted the reputation of the Los

Angeles Police Department (LAPD) in the late 1990s. The anti-gang unit of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Rampart Division—also known as the Community Resources Against Street Hoodlums (CRASH)—was involved in various misconducts including stealing and dealing narcotics, perjury, and framing of suspects, which resulted in the worst corruption scandal in the history of LAPD (Boyer, 2001; Glover & Lait, 2000).

Figure 4-12. Gang graffiti in MacArthur Park and the BLQ



Top: Graffiti by the 18th Street Gang near the MacArthur Park. Photo by Author (2013).
Bottom: Graffiti by the 18th Street Gang on Pico Boulevard. Photo by Eric Brightwell.

Compared to 10 to 15 years ago, the open bazaar for drugs and gang activities has significantly diminished owing to the installation of security cameras and the adoption of gang injunctions (LAPD Chief Officers at the Rampart Division, personal communication, December

12, 2013). However, the problems still exist. Homicides and robberies still occur time to time; gangs still exist; and MacArthur Park still serves as a gathering place for gamblers, prostitutes, and the homeless. The presence of gangs, albeit less apparent, is still a force to be reckoned with in the local community.

The dynamics among the gangs, vendors, and the local businesses is a particularly complex one: gangs demand protection money from vendors; since the vendors are protected by gangs, the local business owners are afraid of reporting the vendors or cleaning their storefront (Parker & Poe, 2006; Police officer, personal communication, December 12, 2013). Furthermore, the vending activities are difficult to regulate. One of the police officers at a public meeting said, "When we ticket them, they can give a fake name and address, which then makes the ticket no use" (public meeting, 2013). In other cases, some of the vendors make such high profits that they would not fear to pay for the ticket even if they get ticketed every day (Police officer, personal communication, December 12, 2013).[15] Whether to permit street vending is currently being discussed among the Vendors' Alliance and two Los Angeles City Council members along with the issues on the enforcement, licensing, and health codes (Saillant & Linthicum, 2013). If new policies are adopted, they will present unique potentials and challenges for MacArthur Park where many immigrant residents' livelihoods are closely linked to street vending.

Lastly, one of the recently rising problems in MacArthur Park is the increasing homeless population. Compared to other chronic problems such as gang and drug trafficking, this is a relatively new phenomenon in this community. In the 1980s, there were homeless people in the

[15] It is not clear whether their willingness to pay tickets is based on their wealth, or because this is simply the best employment option available to them. I suspect that both may be true. Yet, the context that the police officer was underscoring during interview was closer to confirming that some vendors make a lot of money and they do not even care about getting caught and paying the penalty.

park, but many were only immigrant teenagers who had few other places to go (Brother Joseph, 1989). Currently, however, many homeless people in the park are adults of mixed race and ethnicity. The number of homeless has increased in the park and the surrounding area since the last six months or so. "Many of them are from Skid Row and Hollywood," said the Senior Lead Officers at the Los Angeles Police Department. In my inquiry about whether the presence of business improvement districts (BIDs) in downtown and Hollywood have affected the homeless to move to MacArthur Park, the officers confirmed that BIDs are definitely a factor for the migration. One of the officers commented:

> That [BIDs] makes a major difference because what happens with the BID guys is that you can see them. They patrol and clean. And the homeless, they don't like to be awoken up; they don't like to be moved; so when they see BID people there, they are like, 'Aw. I'm not going to be able to sleep here all day because they are going to clean here.' (Police Officer, 2013)

Another officer added that the effort to push the homeless out in those areas is largely based on tourism and the fact that those areas have money to do so. These comments reflect the significant role of BIDs played in managing commercial areas and potentially pushing negative components to the other parts of the city that do not have BIDs (so-called "negative spillover"). Although the homeless populations are concentrated in the park most of the time, their presence could hinder the local business operation by disturbing the pedestrians and occupying public space. Figure 4-13 captures the presence of the homeless in MacArthur Park.

Figure 4-13. Homeless populations in MacArthur Park

Left: Homeless populations and their belongings on the stage of the Levitt Pavilion.
Right: Some of the belongings are locked to the poles during the daytime near the MacArthur Park.
Photos by Author (2013).

4.5 Summary

The analyses in this chapter show that MacArthur Park and the BLQ present prime examples of low-income multiethnic immigrant neighborhoods that share similar demographic, cultural, and commercial characteristics and socioeconomic disadvantages. While these two neighborhoods share similar background, the history of BID formation diverged in the 2000s. Thus, the analyses in this chapter help us discuss the history of BID formation from a comparative framework. In the next chapter, I describe the establishment process of BIDs in MacArthur Park and the BLQ by focusing on the aspect of community development and organizing.

Chapter 5

BID Formation in Low-income Immigrant Neighborhoods

This chapter summarizes major findings from the comparison of the history of BID formation in MacArthur Park and the BLQ. In Section 5.1, I discuss some challenges that low-income immigrant neighborhoods may commonly experience to form BIDs through the analyses of BIDs in Los Angeles and my collected data from the two neighborhoods. Sections 5.2 and 5.3 emphasize the contrasting characteristics of the two cases. Section 5.2 provides an in-depth history of BID formation in each neighborhood. Section 5.3 analyzes the two cases with a community organizing framework which guided me to compare various aspects of community capacity. The analysis identified four factors—source of leadership, organizational resources, functionality of neighborhood councils, and attitudes towards multi-ethnicity—that could have contributed to the different outcomes of BID formation in the two neighborhoods.

5.1 Struggles in Low-Income Immigrant Neighborhoods

While the case of the BLQ demonstrated that BID formation is achievable in a low-income multiethnic neighborhood, the stories of MacArthur Park and the BLQ collectively reveal some struggles that low-income or multiethnic immigrant neighborhoods could commonly experience. Before I discuss the selected cases in depth, I first examine the areas that struggle with BID formation in Los Angeles.

The BID formation pattern in Los Angeles suggests that low-income immigrants neighborhoods may struggle to form BIDs in general. Table 5-1 shows the result of comparing the areas with established BIDs,[16] without BIDs, and with proposed BIDs but are struggling with formation in three variables—median household income, percentage of individuals below poverty, and percentage of foreign-born population—using Census 2000 data. The result reveals a pattern whereby the areas with unsuccessful attempts tend to be low-income neighborhoods with higher-concentration of foreign-born populations.[17] This pattern implies that BID formation may not be equally achievable or feasible in low-income and/or immigrant neighborhoods, and that these neighborhoods could be disproportionately isolated from BID formation.

Table 5-1. Demographic characteristics by the status of BID formation, Los Angeles, 2000

	City Average	Census Tracts without BIDs	Census Tracts with BIDs[a]	Census Tracts with proposed BIDs that have not been established for 4+ years[b]
Median Household Income ($)	42,769	45,879	32,727	27,824
Individuals below poverty level (%)	21	19	28	32
Foreign-born population (%)	39	36	46	56
N	989	776	157	56

Source: Census SF 3 Social and Economic Data (2000).
Note: The geographical analysis was conducted using the census tract boundary in 2000. The 2000 Census SF 3 data were used to compare the socioeconomic condition which would have been the most free from the effects of BIDs since BIDs started to be formed in the late 1990s and in the 2000s.
[a] The areas with established BIDs were defined as the census tracts that intersect with the BID boundaries.
[b] The areas with proposed BIDs were defined as the census tracts that intersect with the neighborhood that proposed to form BIDs. In case the areas around the existing BID boundaries overlap with the areas with proposed BIDs, I categorized those areas as proposed BIDs because these areas are the neighborhoods that struggle with BID formation. There were 13 census tracts that belonged to this case.

[16] All BIDs (i.e., property-based and merchant-based BIDs) in the city of Los Angeles are included in the analysis.
[17] In addition to the descriptive comparison, I tested whether there was a statistical significance between the groups using an ANOVA. The result showed that the areas making efforts to form BIDs are likely to be lower-income, immigrant-oriented neighborhoods compared to the areas without BIDs. Of these areas that have shown interests in forming BIDs, the areas that struggle with BID formation show a higher concentration of foreign-born population compared to the areas with established BIDs.

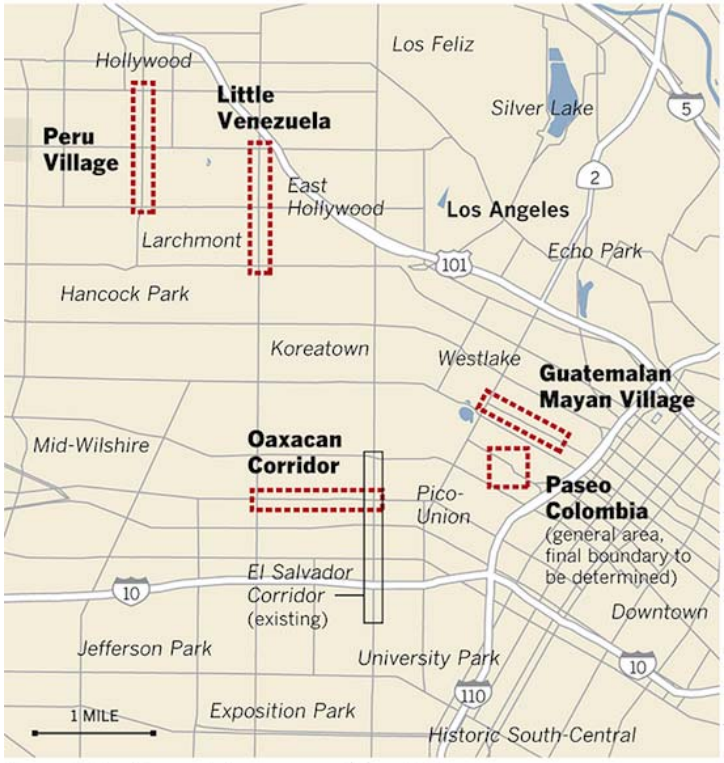
My interviews with city officials, consultants, and community workers in MacArthur Park and the BLQ identified several factors that can hinder BID formation in the context of low-income immigrant neighborhoods. For example, they have difficulties reaching out to property owners due to a high percentage of absentee property owners. Absentee owners may not know or care less about what is happening in the neighborhood in which they own properties. During my interviews, some business owners mentioned, "They [property owners] only show up when they collect rent, and they leave right away." Some business owners did not even know how to reach the property owners. In addition, when neighborhoods have high commercial vacancies, it is challenging to convince property owners to pay assessment fees for forming a new BID because they and their tenants are barely making ends meet.

Another challenge for BID formation in neighborhoods such as the BLQ or MacArthur Park is related to the fact that the majority of community stakeholders are multiethnic immigrants. Although multi-ethnicity can be an asset for creating a multicultural identity of the commercial district, as shown in the case of the BLQ BID, multi-ethnicity can also generate challenges for the process of community organizing. One of the challenges identified in the BLQ was that when there are a lot of ethnic groups, "there could be issues with neighborhood identification and boundaries," said a program manager at LANI. For example, within the BLQ BID boundary, some people near the eastern border of the BID do not resonate with the name of the BID because they believe that "BLQ" does not represent their original neighborhood identity, "Pico-Union."

In addition, some ethnic groups could have sublocal conflicts over space because of their desires to create their own cultural districts. For example, in the *Los Angeles Times* article, "Advocates seek to carve out official Latin American areas in L.A.," Bermudez (2014)

summarized that the Latino Economic Empowerment Round Table is eager to create several Latino ethnic districts, emulating what Asians achieved with Thai Town, Little Tokyo, Historic Filipinotown, and Little Bangladesh while keeping Koreatown expansion at bay. As shown in Figure 5-1, many of the currently proposed Latino ethnic districts are located around MacArthur Park (Westlake) and the BLQ (Pico-Union) areas. On a positive side, these movements could bring synergetic effects to the community development, but on the other hand, they could also present challenges for creating a collective vision for the community. Hutchinson (1999) once summarized the essence of the challenge that Pico-Union was facing as "propinquity without community." As Hutchinson pointed out, dense coexistence of multiethnic groups creates challenges for creating agreeable boundaries, brands, and goals for community development.

Figure 5-1. The proposed map of various Latino ethnic group territories



Source: Latino Economic Empowerment Roundtable

Los Angeles Times

In addition, multiethnic neighborhoods can have difficulties with drawing an equal representation of diverse ethnic groups. When a specific ethnic group takes a lead in BID formation, and especially when this group is an English-speaking group, the participation of other non-English speaking groups can be reached only through an extensive effort for outreach and translation. In the case of the BLQ BID, the leadership was taken by a Greek-American pastor and a number of Latino stakeholders. The BLQ BID leaders have wanted to reach out to various ethnic groups; still, the Board members of the BID mostly represent English and Spanish speaking groups, not Korean and Farsi, the other two major ethnic groups of which property owners comprise. A skewed representation of leadership and outreach could easily result in a knowledge gap among various ethnic groups. The renewal of the BLQ BID process shows that translation of information materials and engagement with ethnic social networks are two potentially important strategies for reaching out to relatively less represented ethnic groups.

Lastly, it became clear that making a distinction between BIDs and other government initiatives was an important step for convincing some property or business owners. Some property or business owners, as recent immigrants, seem to be indifferent or even doubtful of the concept or the activities of the government. Several community organizers mentioned that immigrants tend to avoid participating in BID formation due to negative, even traumatic, experiences that they had with the government back in their home countries, or previous experience participating in short-lived city programs that never returned any benefits. These factors suggest that it is important to understand immigrants' perceptions and historical experiences of "the government."

Furthermore, neighborhoods such as MacArthur Park and the BLQ could experience problems even after BID formation. Gross' (2005) research on BIDs in New York City provides

a point of reference. Gross (2005) argues that BIDs in low-income neighborhoods are more susceptible to management problems. The key findings indicate that low-income neighborhoods have less fiscal and human capital; in turn, they tend to experience problems with finance and leadership to manage BIDs, such as low levels of participation by board members, high levels of internal conflict among them, and high propensity for financial management problems.

My study also found that the BLQ BID has a small-budget BID, and it shares some of the challenges that were identified in Gross' (2005) study. The budget and the average assessments per parcel in the BLQ is the second lowest according to Table 5-2 which shows the financial capacity of BIDs in Los Angeles. The Lincoln Heights Industrial District, a low-income immigrant neighborhood consisting of mostly industrial properties, has the lowest budget. The annual budget of the BLQ BID is only 13% of the average budget of the entire property-based BIDs ($981,672).[18]

Table 5-2. Financial capacity of BIDs in Los Angeles, 2014

Name	The most recent year of establishment or renewal	Annual Budget ($)	Average assessments per parcel ($)
Property-based BIDs			
B.L.Q. – Pico Blvd.	2014	133,299	557.74
Brentwood Village	2013	75,000	2586.21
Century City	2013	900,000	4918.03
Chinatown	2010	1,360,676	3561.98
Downtown Center	2012	5,953,700	2293.41
Downtown Industrial	2009	1,835,611	5700.66
East Hollywood	2012	198,349	1502.64
Encino Commons	2006	123,919	1674.58

[18] I only calculated the average of property-based BIDs for the comparison because merchant-based BIDs have a different renewal and assessment system and usually have a smaller budget compared to property-based BIDs.

Name	The most recent year of establishment or renewal	Annual Budget ($)	Average assessments per parcel ($)
Fashion District	2014	3,588,318	1803.17
Figueroa Corridor	2013	1,207,797	3934.19
Gateway to LA	2006	841,145	8246.52
Greater Leimert Park	2005	167,367	1239.76
Highland Park	2009	361,606	2825.05
Historic Downtown	2014	1,595,055	1224.14
Historic Old Town Canoga Park	2009	226,838	731.74
Historic Waterfront District (San Pedro)	2012	987,418	1225.08
Hollywood Entertainment District	2008	3,420,646	5052.65
Hollywood Media District	2005	1,000,021	2061.90
Larchmont Village	2013	120,000	4800.00
Lincoln Heights	2009	599,083	2139.58
Lincoln Heights Industrial	2011	73,575	295.48
Melrose	2013	486,071	2670.72
North Hollywood	2009	521,662	1185.60
Old Granada Village	2011	118,493	1184.93
Panorama City	2012	449,671	4242.18
South Los Angeles Industrial	2011	788,971	2932.98
South Park	2013	1,856,089	947.47
Studio City	2009	286,561	1418.62
Sunset and Vine	2012	1,429,674	5650.89
Tarzana Safari Walk	2013	70,629	1908.89
Village at Sherman Oaks	2010	108,981	1313.02
Westchester	2012	267,773	2269.26
Westwood	2013	1,241,179	10343.16
Merchant-based BIDs			
Chatsworth		101,460	284.20
Little Tokyo		295,479	Not Available
Los Feliz Village	Annually renewed	78,350	248.73
Wilmington		42,250	293.40

Name	The most recent year of establishment or renewal	Annual Budget ($)	Average assessments per parcel ($)
Wilshire Center		487,106	412.10

Source: Los Angeles Office of the City Clerk.

The small budget limits the capacity of the BID; the BLQ BID can provide only cleaning and maintenance, but not security services and marketing which other richer BIDs would have as default. Furthermore, the small budget of the BLQ BID does not allow having a group of full-time staff (i.e., executive director, treasurer, secretary) and an office. Instead, the BID is managed by an outside non-profit organization, LANI, which provides one part-time staff and one part-time student intern from UCLA. This management strategy shows how the BID adapted and survived as a low-budget organization; however, it also suggests that BIDs in low-income neighborhoods could experience problems with constrained fiscal and human capital even after the BID formation effort has succeeded.

5.2 Two Stories of BID Formation

Despite the geographical adjacency and similar demographic characteristics of MacArthur Park and the BLQ, the two neighborhoods show different outcomes of BID formation. MacArthur does not have a BID although it has shown interests in forming a BID, and although it has been surrounded by several areas that have BIDs, including downtown, Koreatown, and the BLQ since the 1990s as shown in Figure 5-2. On the other hand, the BLQ formed a BID in 2003 and is in the process of renewing their BID as of 2013. Figure 5-3 shows a timeline that compares major events relative to BID formation in MacArthur Park and the BLQ since 2003.

Figure 5-2. The study area relative to the BIDs in surrounding neighborhoods

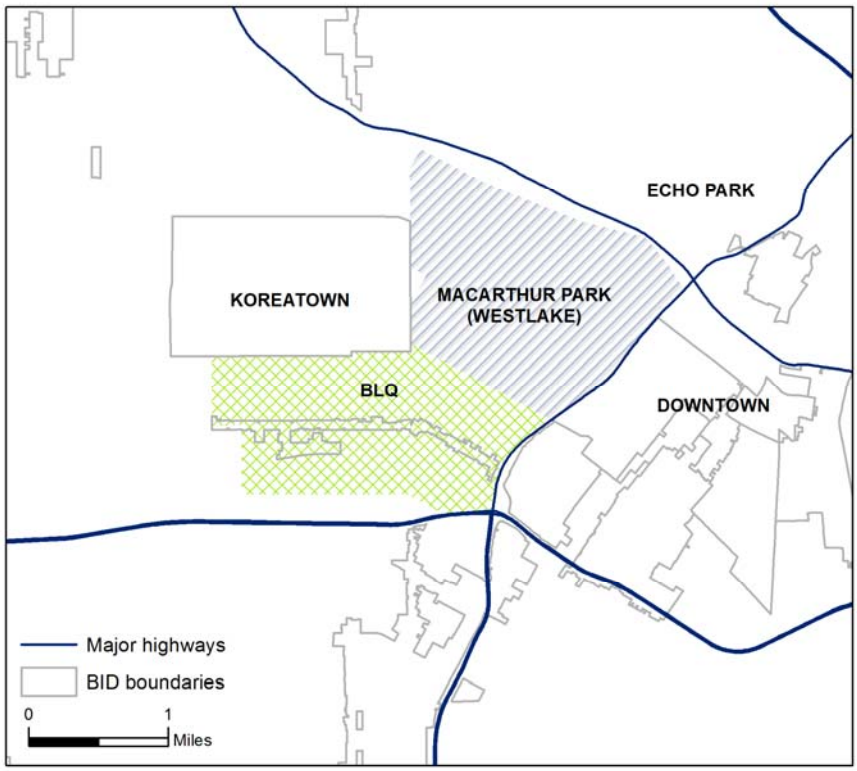
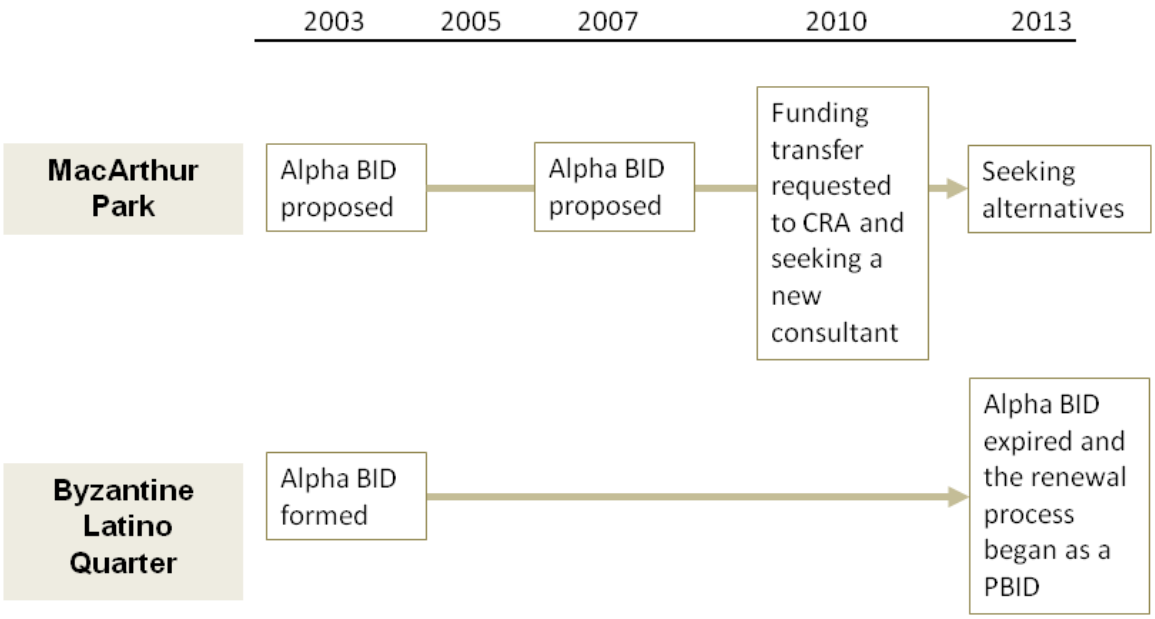


Figure 5-3. Major events relative to BID formation in MacArthur Park and the BLQ



Before discussing this timeline case by case, it is helpful to explain the terms (i.e., 'alpha BID' and 'PBID') that are mentioned in Figure 5-3. In Chapter 1, I briefly described that there are generally two types of BIDs—property-based and merchant-based BIDs. 'PBID' represents the standard property-based BIDs described in Chapter 1. 'Alpha BID' is a type of property-based BIDs that is highly applicable to the history of BID formation in both MacArthur Park and the BLQ. Alpha BIDs can be formed under the authority of charter cities that permit special rules concerning the formation procedures or governing characteristics of BIDs. In the City of Los Angeles, alpha BIDs have two distinct characteristics that distinguish them from other BIDs: (1) alpha BIDs can be established or disestablished with a 30 percent passage threshold, instead of 50 percent, and (2) the life span of alpha BIDs is lengthened from 5 years to 10 years, instead of the maximum 5 years as restricted by a "sunset law." These special rules were approved by the Council of the City of Los Angeles in 2000 with the intention to help economically depressed areas form and keep BIDs; economically depressed areas contain a large percentage of absentee commercial property owners and often lack the ability to meet the 50 percent petition requirement for establishing a BID (*Los Angeles Administrative Code*, 2000). Since then the ordinance helped to establish a number of alpha BIDs in low-income neighborhoods, including Chinatown, Highland Park, and the Byzantine Latino Quarter.

MacArthur Park

Although MacArthur Park has never had a BID, the idea of forming a BID has been in existence since the 1990s, according to Mr. Arturo Chavez, the Chief of Staff at the City Council District 1 (CD1), who has been serving the CD1 for more than a decade. Among those numerous plans and attempts, two accounts of BID formation efforts are displayed in public records. The first one

was in 2003 when the *New City America, Inc.,* a consulting firm that advised the formation of many alpha BIDs in Los Angeles, submitted a proposal to the CD1 concerning the problems of MacArthur Park and ideas to improve the Park and the commercial areas in the neighborhood. The main idea for the improvement was to establish a local alliance that could organize an outreach effort to form a community benefit district (CBD) and manage the CBD after its establishment. The CBD was going to follow the format of an alpha BID according to Mr. Marco Li Mandri, the president of the *New City America, Inc.* Mr. Li Mandri argued in the proposal that self-assessed budget and management could help MacArthur Park improve its physical and social environment as shown in other models, such as the Central Park and Bryant Park Restoration Corporation in New York City. However, this attempt did not lead to BID formation. Mr. Li Mandri notes that the alpha BID (i.e., CBD) did not get formed for two major reasons: lack of support from some of the larger property owners and disagreement on how the city should pay assessment fees for MacArthur Park. These factors probably hindered achieving the 30 percent approval necessary for alpha BID formation.

According to the City Council record, a BID was proposed again in 2007. Sandoval (2010) describes a hopeful prospect for BID formation in MacArthur Park in his book, *Immigrants and the Revitalization of Los Angeles*. Sandoval noted that local groups had organized a new BID with the help of the Councilor's office. Regarding this account, however, little is known about which local groups were organizing the BID and to what degree the local groups were taking initiative. According to my interviews with previous Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) staff and current city officials, it is more probable that the city was taking the initiative. One of the previous CRA Project Managers in MacArthur Park noted:

> When I arrived at CRA/LA, the BID formation stalled and was scrapped due to a lack of support, primarily with the owner of Langer's[19] and the Home Depot shopping center. They actually selected a consultant, who went through the formation process with the City Clerk's Office, but again after surveying the property owners there was little support. Former CRA/LA Westlake Project Manager, Maxine Chavez, and Chief of Staff to Councilmember Ed Reyes, Jose Gardea, were the team leaders on the project. In 2011-12, at the direction of CD1, we [CRA/LA] re-issued an RFP to find a new consultant, but that process stalled again due to a lack of interest or support from the property owners.

The fact that the Councilor's office submitted a motion to form a BID also supports the project manager's statement that the city and CRA were taking initiative. Sandoval's interview with the Chief of Staff for the Councilor also reflects that the City Council office was part of the outreach process to property owners to form a BID. The Chief of Staff mentioned during the interview:

> We've never really had a well organized business community there. That's another purpose of the BID there, to finally have an organized business advocacy group in the area. We are organizing the property owners, and they should be voting later this year on becoming a BID. BIDs have been the tool that many inner cities have been using to revitalize their streets…So now we are going to have one in MacArthur Park. (Sandoval, p.94)

My interview with Mr. Li Mandri, the BID consultant who was also involved in the BID formation effort in MacArthur Park in 2007, also confirmed that the CD1 was very supportive of the BID formation and that there was an extensive outreach to property owners at that time.

Despite promising evidence, however, the MacArthur Park BID formation effort neither succeeded nor reached an official conclusion. City officials, BID consultants, and previous CRA staff identified two main factors that contributed to the failure: a lack of interest among property owners (especially large property owners) and a high percentage of absentee ownership. It is also

[19] Langer's is a highly rated delicatessen restaurant located diagonally across from MacArthur Park. The deli has brought historic value to the neighborhood since it was founded in 1947, and it still attracts numerous visitors. Although the CRA staff mentioned that the owner of Langer's was not supportive of BID formation several years ago, some of my other interviewees (residents and a city official) shared counter-opinions of Langer's that the owner of Langer's is deeply involved in and would be interested in improving the business environment through collective efforts. It is not clear whether the owner of Langer was specifically against BID formation or whether he has changed his attitudes towards a BID-like mechanism later on.

probable that these two factors are reciprocally associated in that property owners who do not reside in a certain neighborhood are less likely to care about the economic health of the neighborhood compared to those whose eyes and ears are close to the neighborhood. Furthermore, residents and the LAPD suggested the relationship between business owners, street vendors, and gangs is a major obstacle for implementing local business improvement effort. According to my interviews, vendors gain protection from gangs by paying them rent, and thus business owners and volunteers who clean the streets have been afraid to challenge the vendors even when they occupy the doorways and disrupt the foot traffic.

According to my interview with the Chief of Staff at CD1, the city has put the idea of forming a BID on hold. Instead, the city is seeking alternatives to a BID and planning to first form a merchant association. The CD1 is hoping that the merchant association will attract the merchants' and the business community's attention, which can eventually evolve into a BID.

The Byzantine Latino Quarter

Compared to the case of MacArthur Park, the BLQ shows longer and more successful history of BID formation. The BLQ BID was approved and adopted by the city in 2003 as a 10-year alpha BID. The BID has lasted for 10 years, and in 2013, the BLQ BID started its renewal process for the standard 5-year property-based BID (also known as 'PBID'). As of April 2014, the BLQ BID passed the ballot process and is waiting for approval to begin its second term from the City of Los Angeles.

The groundwork for the BLQ BID began in the 1990s when Pico-Union showed vigorous community activism and development efforts (the BLQ BID webpage).[20] During this time,

[20] The BLQ BID webpage: http://blqbid.org/main/

church leaders, community-based organizations, and business owners were motivated to combat communal problems such as crime and deterioration of local businesses (Ramirez, 1999). The most prominent movement began in 1996, prompted by Father John Bakas, the dean of St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral, Latino church leaders, and merchants and community members, who joined forces to form a neighborhood revitalization project called the Genesis Plus. The major church and school leaders include St. Thomas the Apostle Church, St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral, Loyola High School, and Bishop-Conaty Our Lady of Loretto High School. In addition, outside community institutions the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative (LANI) helped to develop community plans and strategies to address the needs of the neighborhood (Barajas et al., 1998; the BLQ BID webpage). One of the important accomplishments of the community activism was not only collecting trash but also creating a new identity for the district. Community leaders newly named the district, *Byzantine Latino Quarter,* to celebrate two rich cultures in the neighborhood and also to create a new identity that moves away from the negative image associated with Pico-Union (Levin, 2009; Loukaitou-Sideris, 2000).

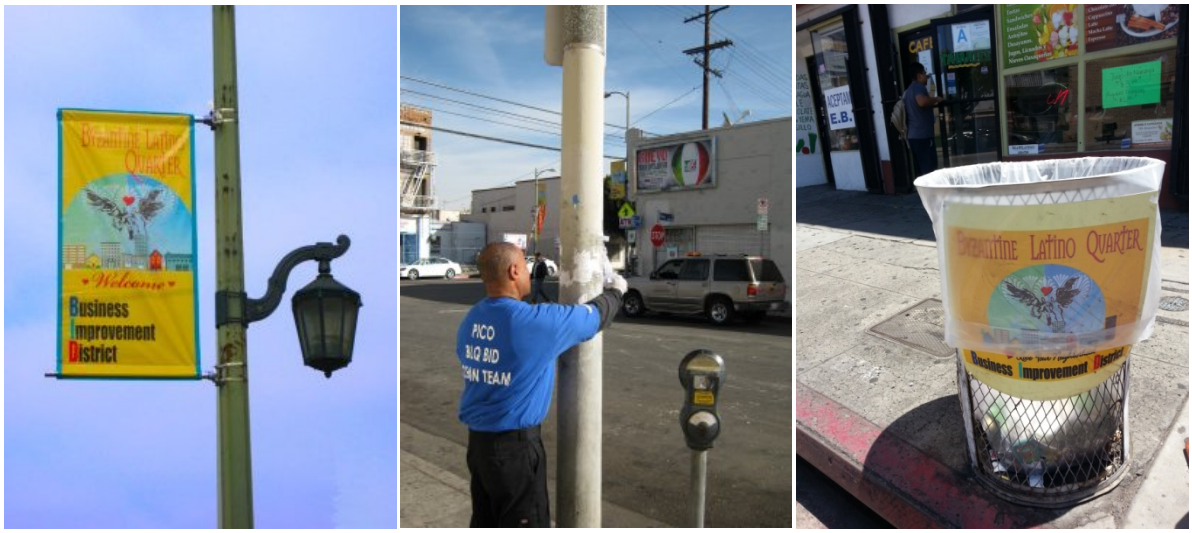
The role of the St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral continued to be central for establishing the BID in 2003. According to my archival research and interviews, Father Bakas was identified as the key stakeholder who initiated the BID formation. Lamenting the deterioration of the neighborhood and threats to the local businesses, he realized the need to improve and maintain the environment for local businesses and started recruiting other stakeholders to form a BID. The same church and school leaders who had been partnering with Father Bakas joined the BID formation efforts (BLQ BID webpage). Father Bakas also sought instrumental support from outside the community. LANI, a non-profit organization, helped to

organize outreach efforts for BID formation and manage the BID programs after the establishment of the BID.

The first BLQ BID was an alpha BID which required 30 percent of the weighted petitions from the property owners. The BID assessed about 193 properties, which included about 450 businesses. Since 2003, the BLQ BID has been engaged with various activities, including trash pick-up, graffiti removal, and beautification. Some examples of the activities are shown in Figure 5-4. The BID term lasted for a period of ten years and expired on December 31, 2013, by which point LANI and the BLQ BID board members sought a renewal of the BID to continue services. When the BID was expired, the City of Los Angeles did not permit alpha BIDs.[21] As a result, the community leaders and LANI staff decided to extend the BID as a standard property-based BID (PBID), which requires more than 50 percent of weighted petitions. After an extensive outreach effort, more than the required amount of petitions was submitted to the City in September, 2013. In early 2014, the required amount of ballot was also successfully collected and submitted. The BID now awaits the official approval from the City as of April 2014. The new BID will be extended until 2019.

[21] The "alpha BID" ordinance has not been acknowledged by the City for the last several years even though the ordinance still exists. It is difficult to find out since when and why the ordinance has been put on hold because there is no official record that announced the temporary discontinuation. According to my interviews with city officials and some BID consultants, the fairness of alpha BIDs (i.e., to what degree 30 % of the petition requirement is democratic) is at least one ostensible point of issue that triggered a debate. Whether or not to permit the ordinance is still being discussed among the City Attorneys.

Figure 5-4. Various activities of the BLQ BID



Left: BLQ BID banner; Middle: BLQ BID clean team; Right: BLQ BID trash receptacle on Pico Boulevard.

5.3 Aspects of Community Organizing

The contrasting history of BID formation discussed in the previous section reveals some differences in how each neighborhood carried out community organizing for BID formation. This section examines four comparative characteristics of community organizing, which include source of leadership, organizational resources, functionality of neighborhood council, and attitude towards multi-ethnicity.

Source of Leadership

The first major difference between the BID formation processes of MacArthur Park and the BLQ lies in the source of leadership. In the BLQ, BID formation was initiated by several community stakeholders from inside the community. To recapitulate, the church leader at St. Sophia Greek Church realized potential benefits of a BID for improving neighborhood environment and started convincing other church and school leaders in the neighborhood to participate in the BID

formation movement. Considering that BIDs are normally initiated by property or business owners who have direct economic gains in mind; the ecumenical leadership in the BLQ is a unique driving force for the BID formation. Mr. Li Mandri, the BID consultant who helped create the BLQ BID, noted, "BLQ was the first district in the country that was motivated by churches" (BID consultant, personal communication, August 28, 2013).

On the other hand, in MacArthur Park, the BID formation was initiated by the City Council—the governmental authority from outside the community. The City Council record mentions that the City Council office, not a group of property or business owners, submitted a motion to form a BID in MacArthur Park, which suggests that the idea to form a BID was introduced from outside the community. After submitting the motion, the City Council, CRA, and the BID consultant reached out to property owners in the neighborhood; however, the attempt failed due to insufficient interest among property owners according to my interviews with city employees, BID consultant, and previous CRA staff.

The comparison of the two neighborhoods makes it considerably clear the extent to which dedicated community stakeholders from inside the community can be a determining factor for BID formation. One CRA staff mentioned that one of the issues is that "a couple of true advocates are needed to keep up the pressure and move the process forward" (CRA staff, personal communication, May 23, 2013). He underscored that these key individuals are necessary to convince the people who will be opposing or indifferent to the idea of forming a BID. The Chief of Staff of the current CD1 also identified a similar factor. He pointed out that the BLQ had "invested participants" to the question about 'why the MacArthur Park BID failed to form while the BLQ BID succeeded' (Chief of Staff, personal communication, February 25, 2014).

Organizational Resources

At an organizational level, it was evident that the BLQ had more organizations that actively participated in community development, many of which have also participated in planning and managing the BID. The successful establishment of the BLQ BID is closely related to long-standing strong grassroots activism and community development efforts in Pico-Union (Kotkin, 1997; Twelvetrees, 1989), the neighborhood in which the BLQ is nestled. Compared to MacArthur Park, Pico-Union has earlier records of community development projects initiated both from inside and outside of the community. For example, a group of residents who had met in a local Methodist Church to discuss community problems formed Pico-Union Housing Corporation (PUHC) (previously also known as *Pico-Union Neighborhood Council*) in 1965. PUHC, a private non-profit corporation, effectively organized local voices and completed neighborhood improvement projects: PUHC mobilized 300 to 500 local people in mass meetings and established street lighting and social services in the community (Twelvetrees, 1989).

In addition, Pico-Union also attracted attention from institutions outside of the community. By the 1960s the CRA planned to redevelop Pico-Union. Although both Pico-Union and MacArthur Park are close to downtown and thus had a potential to be 'land bank' for corporate development schemes, CRA's first redevelopment project for Pico-Union began in 1976, which is more than 20 years earlier than the one in MacArthur Park, which began in 1999 ("CRA/LA Project Areas," n.d.). The CRA projects in Pico-Union contributed to streetscape improvements and housing development. Pico-Union has also had a strong partnership with non-governmental organizations such as UCLA. The UCLA Department of Community Affairs provided technical assistance and training sessions for PUHC in late 1960s; the UCLA Department of Urban Planning worked with the community to assess the community needs and

strategize plans to address those needs in the 1990s (Barajas et al., 1998). Lastly, the BLQ has had major support from a non-profit organization such as LANI, which played an indispensable role in community outreach, planning, and management for both the first and the renewed BIDs.

Relative to the BLQ area, MacArthur Park did not to receive the same amount of support from non-governmental organizations for community development or BID formation. A community campaign called "Rediscover MacArthur Park" has been a great venue that offered monthly meetings and connected residents to non-governmental (i.e., partnering organizations) and governmental (i.e., CD1, LAPD) organizations. Nonetheless, the agendas of the meetings were mostly limited to the issues related to revitalizing the park (e.g., homeless, vendors). When it came to neighborhood level improvement or development goals, governmental institutions played the most significant role for proposing and fulfilling them in MacArthur Park.

Functionality of Neighborhood Councils

In terms of the participation of residents in community affairs, MacArthur Park and the BLQ contrasted in the functionality of neighborhood councils. Los Angeles created a system of neighborhood councils (NCs) in 1999 as part of a charter reform, which aimed to appease the secession movements from the areas of Valley, Hollywood, and the Harbor, and to empower stakeholders in local communities to participate in planning and politics (Musso, 2012; Purdum, 1999). For the first time, the charter established a system in which neighborhood groups can form their own advisory councils that can discuss and make decisions on community affairs. NCs are quasi-governmental organizations that are "endorsed and regulated by the city but with a strong grassroots character and unpaid volunteers" (Musso, 2012, p54). As of 2014, there are

approximately 100 Neighborhood Councils in the City of Los Angeles ("About Neighborhood Councils," 2012).

Both MacArthur Park and Pico-Union certified NCs in 2003; however, it turned out that the Pico-Union NC (which governs the BLQ area) demonstrates better functionality compared to the one in MacArthur Park NC. The Pico-Union NC also shows a close connection with the BLQ BID, presumed from the fact that the first president of the Pico-Union NC, Mr. Ted Pastures, was also a dedicated president of the BLQ BID board since 2005 until he passed away in 2013 ("In Memory of Ted Pastras," n.d., "Past Presidents of Pico Union Neighborhood Council," n.d.). The BID Board meeting that I attended in the BLQ in late 2013 also received the presence of some residents (the members of Pico-Union Neighborhood Council) who actively participated in sharing concerns and ideas about community affairs.

On the other hand, the MacArthur Park NC showed signs of internal divide, weak leadership, a lack of interest from the business community, and mismanagement of funds. According to my interview with a project coordinator at the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, the government branch that assists neighborhoods with the operation of NCs, the MacArthur Park NC has been recently struggling with an internal divide within the Board members (personal communication, June 21, 2013). As of mid-2013, many board member seats were vacant; the quorum of the NC was not met; some of the NC meetings were cancelled, and thus the funding was frozen by the government. The project coordinator pointed out that these issues were affecting the functionality of the NC and mentioned, "There was a time when the MacArthur Park NC was once thriving; however, if the recent issues continue, the NC is in danger of dis-certification." According to a person who was a member of the MacArthur Park NC for 11 years until 2012, recruiting business people to be involved was always difficult for the

NC. Another resident who used to be involved with the NC added a comment that the NC did not know how to spend the funding well (personal communication, January 24, 2014). She specifically criticized that an exorbitant portion of the budget was spent on translation of the NC meeting into Spanish and printing-out neighborhood T-shirts. In addition to the MacArthur Park NC, two more NCs were created to cover the other side of the neighborhood in 2011, named, Westlake North and Westlake South. It is not clear whether the newer NCs are functioning better; nonetheless, the fact that MacArthur Park is governed by three different NCs whereas Pico-Union is governed by a single NC may reflect that the internal dynamics of neighborhood governance is more cohesive in the BLQ compared to MacArthur Park.

Attitude toward Multi-ethnicity

Although both MacArthur Park and the BLQ are multiethnic immigrant neighborhoods, the BLQ has been more active in creating an environment that embraces the multi-ethnicity of the community. As previously mentioned, the adoption of a new name, *Byzantine Latino Quarter*, for the neighborhood was a reflection of the community's effort to celebrate multicultural history and diverse backgrounds of the residents and businesses. The community's initiative to embrace multi-ethnicity is also explicitly demonstrated on the message in a monumental mural at the corner of Normandie Avenue and Pico Boulevard. Figure 5-5 shows the mural with a big sign of the neighborhood name and an inspiring message on the top, noting: "We are each of us angels with one wing. We can only fly embracing each other." In almost every community meeting, this motto was repeatedly brought up by Father Bakas from the Greek Orthodox Church to remind the audience of the importance of diversity. The church leaders' effort and its influence on the neighborhood are well-captured in an article in the *Los Angeles Times*:

> After a three-decade hiatus, the church has restarted its annual Greek Festival, which fits its neighborhood by putting a Cuban show band alongside Greek dancing and dolmas up against a margarita booth and tacos with lamb and feta cheese.
>
> Church leaders have spearheaded monthly town hall meetings to bring neighbors together, air concerns to local officials and help the area's immigrant population learn to demand services and participate in the democratic process.
>
> When the meetings first started in 1996, some drew as few as five people. Many immigrants who fled corrupt Latin American regimes without legal papers were fearful of authority figures, church members say. Today, the meetings draw as many as 200 people to quiz representatives from law enforcement, education and government. (Watanabe, 2002)

Although the name 'BLQ' itself does not represent every racial or ethnic group in the neighborhood, the message explicitly underscores the importance of acknowledging one another and collaborating with other groups. Comparatively, according to my observations of the neighborhood external characteristics and internal meetings, the MacArthur Park community did not show similar or other kinds of distinct effort to embrace multiethnic backgrounds of the community members.

Figure 5-5. The signature mural and message in the BLQ

Photo by the BLQ BID.

Summary

In sum, the case study of MacArthur Park and the BLQ suggests that low-income multiethnic neighborhoods deal with obstacles for organizing collective actions, such as high absentees of property and business owners, insufficient funding and staff, multiethnic groups' conflicts over space and identity of the BID, lack of collective vision, and lack of interest in participating in community affairs due to distrust of the government. Nonetheless, the processes in which MacArthur Park and the BLQ tried to form BID were different and yielded corresponding outcomes. In Sections 5.2 and 5.3, I described some community characteristics that were distinctively comparable and that I believe might have contributed to the contrasting outcomes. In short, the key comparative characteristics I described above can be summarized in Table 5-3.

Table 5-3. Comparative characteristics of community organizing in MacArthur Park and the BLQ

	MacArthur Park	**The BLQ**
Source of Leadership	Outside community	Inside community
Organizational Resources	Mostly the city government and CRA	Mostly non- and quasi-governmental organizations
Attitude toward Multi-ethnicity	Does not explicitly show a clear goal or direction to embrace diversity	Has a clear goal and direction to embrace one another
Functionality of Neighborhood Council	Malfunctioning	Well-functioning

The comparison shows that each neighborhood had a different—one external, the other internal—source of leadership; the City Council and St. Sophia Church led the initiating effort for MacArthur Park and the BLQ, respectively. The comparison also shows that the BLQ had more organizational support from both inside and outside of the community: from the inside, church and school leaders were strong proponents for BID formation, and from the outside, non-

governmental organizations such as UCLA and LANI helped the BLQ to create a BID. The BLQ had more explicit goals and community presentations to embrace multiethnic groups. In addition, the BLQ has a stronger and longer history of community activism, which is signified through active participation of residents (i.e., Pico-Union neighborhood council) and property and business owners. In short, the BLQ showed strengths the following factors: invested and persistent community stakeholders, partnerships with non- and quasi-governmental and organizations, sound foundation of residents' activism, and awareness of demographic change and openness to multi-ethnicity in the neighborhood.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

6.1 Main Findings and Implications

The main purpose of this research was to examine the factors that hinder or facilitate the successful formation of business improvement districts (BIDs) in low-income multiethnic neighborhoods that are situated in the inner city of Los Angeles. For a close examination of my research inquiry, I analyzed the formation of BIDs in two low-income immigrant neighborhoods in Los Angeles: MacArthur Park and the Byzantine Latino Quarter ('BLQ,' part of Pico Union). The stories of these two neighborhoods revealed several factors that hinder BID formation in low-income multiethnic neighborhoods, including high percentage of absentee property owners and commercial vacancies, ethnic tensions over space, information gap within and unequal representation of multiethnic groups, immigrants' disinclination to participate in formal programs, and insufficient funding and staff.

Despite these common challenges, the BID formation efforts in MacArthur Park and the BLQ evolved differently with respect to community resources and organizing processes. The BLQ managed to form a BID (even twice) since 2003, whereas MacArthur Park has not been able to establish a BID even after a long pursuit by the City Council and the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). This study identified four comparative differences between MacArthur Park and the BLQ, concerning the neighborhoods' source of leadership,

organizational resources, functionality of neighborhood councils, and attitudes towards multi-ethnicity. The factors that may have contributed to the successful BID formation in the BLQ include invested and persistent community stakeholders, partnerships with non- and quasi-governmental organizations, sound foundation of residents' activism, and an awareness of demographic change and openness to multi-ethnicity in the neighborhood. On the other hand, MacArthur Park showed relatively low levels of grassroots leadership, low variety of partnership organizations, weak venues where residents participate in community affairs, and the absence of an explicit goal or direction to embrace multiethnic groups in the neighborhood.

The findings of this study engender implications for the research of BID formation and community development practices. First, this study suggests that 'areas without BIDs' should not be understood uniformly. Rather, it is important to discern why these areas do not have BIDs. Some neighborhoods may not have BIDs because they do not have urgent problems to solve, while other neighborhoods may struggle with forming BIDs despite their interest and need. Differentiating the various cases of 'not having a BID' helps to identify areas that are particularly marginalized in service delivery as well as in opportunities for community development. As this study implies that areas with unsuccessful attempts of BID formation may disproportionally be low-income immigrant neighborhoods, further research should continue to examine the kind of struggles that these neighborhoods usually experience in BID formation, and how they can develop self-help economic tools such as BIDs in the time of privatized and fragmented urban management.

The findings of this study also help to acknowledge the importance of community resources and dynamics for BID formation. The stories of MacArthur Park and the BLQ show that BID formation is a complex process that depends not only on the economic characteristics of

properties and property owners, but also on various political and cultural aspects of communities and the process of community organizing. Specifically this study resonates with some important principles of community organizing and community-based development. For example, my findings provide a strong support for some of the criteria identified in previous research for successful community organizing and development, including internal leadership, grassroots community organizing, and strong and direct ties with various human and organizational resources (Chaskin, 2001; Dreier, 1996; Peterman, 2000; Smock, 2004). Particularly, the case of the BLQ demonstrates that religious institutions can play a key role in community organizing, as Dreier (1996) argues "in part because they provide the moral solidarity that adds an important dimension to self help efforts that transcend narrow concepts of self interest (p.126)." The characteristics of churches and schools can add an important aspect for future BID formation research especially in the context of low-income immigrant neighborhoods.

Furthermore, this study expands the current theoretical and empirical understandings of multicultural and multilingual community organizing by providing an actual case of organizing process in which multiethnic community stakeholders cooperate in order to achieve a collective goal. The case of the BLQ demonstrates potential challenges with multicultural and multilingual organizing, which include territorial competitions over ethnic identity, knowledge gap among various ethnic groups, and thus their unequal participation in local governance. These issues create room for discussing a new role for community organizers or strategies of multicultural community organizing.

For practice, the findings of this research can help public officials and community organizers plan community development strategies, particularly in the areas that show socioeconomic challenges and struggles with forming collective action for community

development. The comparison between MacArthur Park and the BLQ shows several areas that the city and community stakeholders can focus on in order to form a grassroots organization. For example, communities can mobilize community building efforts by identifying local leaders and investing in leadership training, charting out social and ethnic networks for community outreach, and evaluating organizational resources and developing partnership organizations.

Given that BID formation can be contingent upon community capacity and resources, the city government may help the areas that struggle with BID formation more effectively by diversifying the types of public assistance. The Los Angeles City government has been assisting communities that are interested in forming BIDs by providing a lump sum fund for hiring a consultant who can lead the BID formation process by providing various technical and legal services (e.g., survey the business community, outreach to property owners, collect a required level of petitions, and prepare planning documents to submit to the City Council). This kind of assistance works well for the areas that have strongly motivated and organized communities. However, in the areas with weak motivations and resources, as demonstrated in MacArthur Park, the funds for hiring consultants can run out before a BID forms because of slow progress in outreach and petition collection. When funding runs out before BID formation, the community must go through another Request for Proposal (RFP) in order to hire a new consultant. The time to search for a new consultant, and the time for the selected consultant to restart the outreach process, can work adversely for BID formation. To facilitate the formation process more effectively, the city can customize the RFP requirement according to the local context. The city can also diversify the points of entry for assisting communities. For example, the government could provide more direct assistance for developing local leadership; training community

organizers; and holding public meetings, educational sessions, or social events that can raise awareness of collective problems and how BIDs help to solve some of those problems.

6.2 Limitations

This study shares general strengths and weaknesses of a case-study research. By nature, a case study provides minute and concrete details of an interesting phenomenon in politics and planning, but it does not allow inference of causality between variables of interest or summary into general propositions (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Corresponding to Flyvbjerg's description, this comparative case study yields an in-depth understanding of success and failure of BID formation in two low-income immigrant neighborhoods. However, the findings of this study can neither test statistical significance nor draw a probabilistic conclusion on certain factors for forming BIDs. For example, although MacArthur Park and the BLQ showed several contrasting characteristics, the findings do not mean that the failure of the effort to form a BID in MacArthur Park is caused by a lack of internal leadership or organizational capacity.

In addition, because case studies are situated in a specific political, economic, geographical, and cultural context, applying their implications to other contexts is only valid when the situation is similar. This particularly applies to the subject of this study because BID formation is a sublocal phenomenon that is sensitive to different sets of legal and political measures created by state and local governments and also to the socioeconomic condition of business communities. Therefore, inference should be made carefully. For example, although the BLQ case suggests that ecumenical leadership can play an important role for initiating BID formation, it does not answer the question of whether any kind of religious leader or organizations would have the same influence in other neighborhoods.

Methodologically, this study bears limitations with collecting interviews from property owners. Contacting and interacting with property owners was more difficult than I had expected because of high absentee ownership and inaccurate city records. Staff at the Office of the City Clerk confirmed that the city has not been able to update the information of property owners in a timely manner because of budget deficits. Community organizers who sought to contact property owners in the BLQ either used public search engines to collect scratch information of properties or contacted business owners to learn about their landlords. For the case of the BLQ, I had relatively more opportunities of interacting with property owners because the BID renewal process was persistently in action during the time of my fieldwork, and also because I was part of the outreach process to property owners. However, I could not conduct as many systematic interviews as I had hoped with property owners in MacArthur Park because I did not have connections or proper resources to identify property owners. Due to these obstacles, the presentation of direct knowledge of property owners is relatively weak in MacArthur Park.

6.3 Areas of Future Research

Based on the lessons and limitations of this study, I suggest four areas of research that will provide additional insights into developing theories and practices of community development and organizing based on local businesses. First, future research can incorporate the perspectives of property and business owners more systematically. A deeper understanding of the internal dynamics of business communities can identify additional factors that may affect the process and outcome of BID formation. For example, information such as socioeconomic characteristics of property and business owners, their relationships with one another, and their opinions and motivations on BIDs may reveal important patterns that are related to the process and outcome of

BID formation. In addition, in cases of multiethnic immigrant neighborhoods, I hope to examine how information flows among the property owners and business owners regarding BID formation. Identifying the degree of information gap among diverse ethnic and socioeconomic groups will help researchers and city governments to understand the internal power dynamics of the community stakeholders more clearly and also to develop a way of facilitating communication and information dissemination in the process of multicultural and multilingual community organizing.

Second, an in-depth examination of the relationship among property owners, tenants (i.e., business owners), informal economic actors (i.e., illegal vendors), and gangs can add more insights into the types of struggles that the areas with a high concentration of recent immigrants may commonly experience. This kind of relationship represents a variety of issues concerning immigrants' rights to the city, economy, and tensions over space. In-depth research on this topic can help identify specific struggles that each group is experiencing and propose creative ideas for community development that not only benefit the property owners but also other groups in the community.

Third, while my study was limited to describing several intrinsic differences in the two neighborhoods, in-depth historical research can help to understand the root cause for the varying characteristics of community capacity. For example, historical analyses can examine why one neighborhood historically has more organizational resources or why one neighborhood has better-functioning neighborhood councils compared to the other neighborhood. These analyses may reveal the underlying cause of why certain neighborhoods were able to possess more resources than others, and how those differences are linked to the differences in BID formation.

Fourth, this study leaves the question of whether a BID is a universal solution for all communities that need urban revitalization unexamined. The fact that the City Council redirected its effort from forming a BID to forming a merchant association in MacArthur Park suggests that the success of BID formation may not only be a matter of community capacity but also be a matter of suitability and timing. Further research can focus on areas in which communities have developed mechanisms other than BIDs to protect businesses and improve business environments. This line of research can elucidate the type of community development practices that can be effective either when communities are not ready to establish a BID or when they prefer alternatives to improve their business environment. On a broader level, this research can provide insights for the city government and planners about whether or not BIDs are necessary and how to assist business communities to establish an organization that can best serve the local need.

Appendix

A. Interview guide for community stakeholders

[Both MacArthur Park and the BLQ]

1. Could you briefly introduce your position and role in the community?
2. Could you describe how the community has changed over the last 20 years?
3. What do you think the most pressing issues are in MacArthur Park and/or Pico-Union (e.g., economic development, quality of life, social justice, etc.)?
4. How would you describe the similarities and differences between the BLQ and MacArthur Park (Westlake) area?
5. What kind of community agendas are you currently working on?
6. What do you think are the main challenges of the neighborhood businesses?
7. Do you sense any racial/ethnic tensions within a business community (i.e., among property owners, between property owners and tenants, or among community stakeholders)?
8. Do you know what a BID is? If so, could you describe the previous efforts to form a BID in this community (i.e., timeline, main stakeholders, outreach process, current status, and voices for or against the BID)?
9. Do you have suggestions of people I could talk to?

[BLQ]

1. What major factors do you think contributed to the successful formation of the BLQ BID?
2. Were there any difficulties to reach out to property owners when collecting petitions? If so, could you describe the obstacles?
3. What do you think of the strengths and/or weaknesses of the BLQ BID compared to other BIDs?
4. If you meet someone who's interested in forming a BID in a neighborhood similar to the BLQ, how would you advise?

B. Interview guide for community development partners

1. Could you briefly introduce your position and role?
2. Could you describe your partnership with the community (i.e., MacArthur Park and/or the BLQ)?
3. Could you describe the neighborhood condition when you began working with the community and how it has changed since then?
4. How do you perceive BIDs in terms of their benefits and harms?
5. Were you involved with BID formation effort in MacArthur Park or the BLQ? If so, could you describe the formation process?
6. If you are familiar with the BID formation process in an either community, to what degree do you think the outreach process was communicative and participatory?
7. Aside from BID formation, how have you been working with the community?
8. What are your goals to make the community better in the near future?
9. Do you have suggestions of people I could talk to?

C. Interview guide for city employees

[Common questions]

1. Could you briefly introduce your position and role?
2. Which part of MacArthur Park and/or Pico-Union areas do you work for?
3. Some people believe that street maintenance should be provided by the government. How do you think about the comment?
4. How do you perceive BIDs in terms of their benefits and harms?
5. Do you expect BIDs to play an increasingly bigger role in the future?
6. Do you think a BLQ BID plays a significant role for making differences between commercial areas in MacArthur Park and Pico-Union?
7. Could you share the history of BID formation efforts in MacArthur Park, if you know any?
8. Why do you think some neighborhoods struggle with BID formation?
9. Could you identify some determining factors for successful BID formation?
10. Can you think of other forms of organizations that can function as alternatives to BIDs?
11. Could you explain how different entities (e.g., the city council, city attorney, BID consultants) work together to establish BIDs?
12. Do you have suggestions of people I could talk to?

[City Council District 1 Office]

1. Is the current staff interested in creating a BID in MacArthur Park?
    a. If so, what would be the timeline? Do you see any obstacles for BID formation?
    b. If not, why? Do you have alternative plans?
2. Could you describe the services and/or programs provided by the City Council District 1 for MacArthur Park and Pico-Union?

[Office of the City Clerk]

1. Could you summarize the incentives that the Office provides to the community interested in forming BIDs?
2. Could you explain the history and legal framework of “alpha BIDs”?

D. Interview guide for BID consultants

1. Could you briefly introduce your position and role?
2. Could you describe your former and current BID formation projects?
3. Who do you work with to make progress in BID formation? What organizations or persons (e.g., city clerk's office, community organizations, and attorneys) are involved in the process?
4. Who usually conduct outreach to property owners? What are some strategies that have helped the outreach process?
5. What are some usual struggles or barriers that you experience for BID formation?
6. Do you expect neighborhood residents or community organizations play a major role for staffing after forming a BID?
7. Do you know any BID formation efforts that have stalled? If so, could you share stories about those cases?
8. Why do you think several neighborhoods in Los Angeles (e.g., MacArthur Park) have struggled to form BIDs?
9. Have you seen cases of BID formation that were relatively more efficient and easygoing than others? If so, what would you say the most important factors that facilitate BID formation?
10. Do you have advice for future BID consultants who would be interested in forming BIDs in lower-income ethnic communities?
11. Do you have suggestions of people I could talk to?

Bibliography

Abdollah, T. (2007, July 4). MacArthur, Echo parks boat-free? *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/2007/jul/04/local/me-boats4

About Neighborhood Councils. (2012). *Department of Neighborhood Empowerment*. Retrieved May 28, 2014, from http://empowerla.org/about-neighborhood-councils/

Adler, M. (2000). Why BIDs are bad business. *The New York Times, Soapbox, Section 14*, p. 17.

Alinsky, S. D. (1971). Rules for radicals: a practical primer for realistic radicals. New York: Vintage Books.

Allen, S. (2012, December 14). Some chafe at downtown L.A.'s business improvement districts. *The Los Angeles Times*.

Andersen, K. (1983, June). Los Angeles: The New Ellis Island. *Time Magazine*.

Angier, B. S. (1903, May 17). A Historical and Pictorial Glance at the Beautiful Parks of the City of Los Angeles. *The Los Angeles Times1*, p. C8.

Anonymous. (1942, May 8). It's Gen. MacArthur and Not Westlake Park From Now On. *The Los Angeles Times*.

Arsenault, P. (2008). *A Budget Analysis of the City of Los Angeles*.

Atkinson, R. (2003). Addressing urban social exclusion through community involvement in urban regeneration. In R. Imrie & M. Raco (Eds.), *Urban Renaissance? New Labour, Community and Urban Policy* (pp. 101–119). Bristol: The Policy Press.

Barajas, Y., Fang, D. Y.-T., Hart, E., Hiyake, K., Ibarra, E., Iseki, H., … Loukaitou-Sideris, A. (1998). *The Byzantine-Latino Quarter: Creating Community in Los Angeles*. University of California, Los Angeles, Los Angeles.

Bermudez, E. (2014, April 2). Advocates seek to carve out official Latin American areas in L.A. *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/2014/apr/02/local/la-me-little-latin-america-20140403

Billings, S. B., & Leland, S. (2009). Examining the Logic Behind the Self-Help, Self-Taxing Movement: Business Improvement District Formation. *Public Budgeting & Finance*, *29*(4), 108–124. doi:10.1111/j.1540-5850.2009.00945.x

Birch, E. L. (2002). Having a Longer View on Downtown Living. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, *68*(1), 5–21. doi:10.1080/01944360208977188

Bowers, A. (2002). Secession Movement in Los Angeles: Three Areas of the City Consider Breaking Away. National Public Radio. Retrieved from http://www.npr.org/news/specials/la/secession/

Boyd, F. A. (n.d.). A City Set on a Hill: The Story of Saint Sophia's Neighborohod Transformation. *Saint Sophia Cathedral*, p. 2.

Boyer, P. J. (2001, May). Bad Cops. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2001/05/21/010521fa_FACT?currentPage=all

Briffault, R. (1997). The Rise of Sublocal Structures in Urban Governance. *Minnesota Law Review*, *82*, 503.

Briffault, R. (1999). A Government for Our Time? Business Improvement Districts and Urban Governance. *Columbia Law Review*, *99*, 365.

Briffault, R. (2010). The Business Improvement District Comes of Age. *Drexel Law Review*, *3*, 19.

Brightwell, E. (2013). The Byzantine-Latino Quarter -- We are each of us angels with one wing. *AMOEBLOG*. Retrieved October 30, 2013, from http://www.amoeba.com/blog/2013/03/eric-s-blog/the-byzantine-latino-quarter-we-are-each-of-us-angels-with-one-wing.html

Brooks, L. (2006). Does Spatial Variation in Heterogeneity Matter? Assessing the Adoption Patterns of Business Improvement Districts. *Review of Policy Research*, *23*(6), 1219–1234. doi:10.1111/j.1541-1338.2006.00255.x

Brooks, L. (2007). Unveiling hidden districts: assessing the adoption patterns of business improvement districts in California. *National Tax Journal*, *60*(1), 5–24.

Brooks, L. (2008). Volunteering to be taxed: Business improvement districts and the extra-governmental provision of public safety. *Journal of Public Economics*, *92*, 388–406.

Brooks, L., & Strange, W. C. (2011). The micro-empirics of collective action: The case of business improvement districts. *Journal of Public Economics*, *95*(11-12), 1358–1372. doi:10.1016/j.jpubeco.2011.05.015

Cain, B. E. (2009, April 15). Tax Revolts: Some Succeed, Most Don't. *The New York Tmes*. Retrieved from http://roomfordebate.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/04/15/tax-protests-that-changed-history/?_php=true&_type=blogs&_r=0

Calanog, V. (2006). *Business Improvement districts: crime deterrence or displacement? Essays in the Economics of Development Strategies*. University of Pennsylvania.

Campbell, S. (2003). *Case studies in planning: Comparative advantages and the problem of generalization* (No. 02-07). *Urban and Regional Research Collaborative, University of Michigan, Working Paper Series*.

Caruso, G., & Weber, R. (2006). Getting the Max for the Tax: An Examination of BID Performance Measures. *International Journal of Public Administration*, *29*(1-3), 187–219. doi:10.1080/01900690500409088

Castillol, G. A. (2013, January 10). Boyle Heights' Businesses Face Long List of Problems, Study Finds. *EGPNEWS*. Retrieved from http://egpnews.com/2013/01/boyle-heights?-businesses-face-long-list-of-problems-study-finds/

Chaskin, R. J. (2001). Building Community Capacity: A Definitional Framework and Case Studies from a Comprehensive Community Initiative . *Urban Affairs Review* , *36* (3), 291–323. doi:10.1177/10780870122184876

Chavis, D. M., & Wandersman, A. (1990). Sense of Community in the Urban Environment : A Catalyst for Participation and Community Development. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *18*(1), 55–81.

Cho, S. U. (2010). *A Study of the Area Managemnet Program in Urban Regeneration Projects*. Incheon Development Institutue.

City of Los Angeles Budget - Revenue and Expenditures Fiscal Years 1989, 1997 & 1998. (2012). *Los Angeles Almanac*. Retrieved March 03, 2014, from http://www.laalmanac.com/government/gx06_98.htm

Citywide Busingess Improvement District Program. (n.d.). *Los Angeles Office of the City Clerk*. Retrieved April 30, 2014, from http://clerk.lacity.org/stellent/groups/departments/@clerk_bid_contributor/documents/contributor_web_content/lacityp_025626.pdf

Colombijn, F., & Erdentug, A. (Eds.). (2002). *Urban Ethnic Encounters: The Spatial Consequences*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Conservancy, L. A. (2009). Los Angeles history – self guided walking tour.

Cook, P. J., & MacDonald, J. (2011). Public Safetly through private action: An economic assessment of BIDs. *Economic Journal*, *121*, 445–462.

CRA/LA Project Areas. (n.d.). *Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles*. Retrieved May 28, 2014, from http://www.crala.org/internet-site/Projects/Redevelopment_Plans_and_Maps.cfm

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd editio.). Sage Publications, Inc.

Cultural Heritage Commission Recommendation Report. (2009) (p. CASE NO.: CHC–2009–2861–NR). Los Angeles.

Daley, J., & Wong, P. (1994). Community development with emerging ethnic communities. *Journal of Community Practice*, *1*(1), 9–24. doi:10.1300/J125v01n01_02

Dreier, P. (1996). Community Empowerment Strategies: The Limits and Potential of Community Organizing in Urban Neighborhoods. *Cityscape*, *2*(2), 121–159.

Eisinger, P. (1998). City Politics in an Era of Federal Devolution. *Urban Affairs Review*, *33*(3), 308–325. doi:10.1177/107808749803300302

Ellen, I. G., Schwartz, A. E., Voicu, I., Brooks, L., & Hoyt, L. (2007). The Impact of Business Improvement Districts on Property Values : Evidence from New York City [with Comments]. *Brookings-Wharton Papers on Urban Affairs*, 1–39.

Erie, S. P., Kogan, V., & MacKenzie, S. a. (2010). Redevelopment, San Diego Style: The Limits of Public--Private Partnerships. *Urban Affairs Review*, *45*(5), 644–678. doi:10.1177/1078087409359760

Fact Sheet: President Obama's Promise Zones Initiative. (2014). *The White House Office of the Press Secretary*. Retrieved from http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/01/08/fact-sheet-president-obama-s-promise-zones-initiative

Fisher, R. (1984). Let the People Decide: Neighborhood Organizing in America. Boston, Mass.: Twayne Publishers. Retrieved from http://mirlyn.lib.umich.edu/Record/000206889 CN - HN 90 .R3 F571 1984

Fisher, R., & Shragge, E. (2000). Challenging Community Organizing. *Journal of Community Practice*, *8*(3), 1–19. doi:10.1300/ J125v08n03_01

Fishman, R. (1996). Re-Imagining Los Angeles. In M. Dear, E. Schockman, & G. Hise (Eds.), *Rethinking Los Angeles* (pp. 251–262). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research. *Qualitative Inquiry* , *12* (2), 219–245. doi:10.1177/1077800405284363

Fraser, J., & Kick, E. (2005). Understanding Community Building in Urban America. *Journal of Poverty*, *9*(1), 23–43. doi:10.1300/J134v09n01_02

Frey, W. H., & DeVol, R. C. (2000). *America's Demography in the New Century: Aging Baby Boomers and New Immigrants as Major Players*. Santa Monica, CA.

Furlillo, A. (1985, May 12). Rampart: Streets, Cops Are Tough. *Los Angeles Times*, p. C1.

Gerring, J. (2007). *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. Cambridge University Press.

Gittell, R. J., & Vidal, A. (1998). Community organizing: building social capital as a development strategy. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Retrieved from http://mirlyn.lib.umich.edu/Record/003993573 CN - HN 90 .C6 G571 1998 CN - HN 90 .C6 G57 1998

Gittell, R., & Wilder, M. (1999). Community Development Corporations: Critical Factors That Influence Success. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, *21*(3), 341–361. doi:10.1111/0735-2166.00021

Glover, S., & Lait, M. (2000, April 21). Judge Overturns 7 More Tainted Convictions. *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/2000/apr/21/local/me-21973

Graham, S., & Marvin, S. (2001). *Splintering urbansim: Networked infrastructures, technological mobilities, and the urban condition*. New York and London: Routledge.

Gross, J. S. (2005). Business Improvement Districts in New York City's Low-Income and High-Income Neighborhoods. *Economic Development Quarterly*, *19*(2), 174–189. doi:10.1177/0891242404273783

Gutierrez, L., Alvarez, A. R., Nemon, H., & Lewis, E. A. (1996). Multicultural Community Organizing: A Strategy for Change. *Social Work* , *41* (5), 501–508. doi:10.1093/sw/41.5.501

Gutierrez, L., & Lewis, E. A. (1995). A feminist perspective on organizing with women of color. In F. G. Rivera & J. L. Erlich (Eds.), *Community Organizing in a Diverse Society* (2nd ed., pp. 95–112). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Gutierrez, L., Lewis, E. A., Nagda, B. (Ratnesh) A., Wernick, L., & Shore, N. (2005). Multicultural Community Practice Strategies and Intergroup Empowerment. In M. Weil & M. Reisch (Eds.), *The Handbook of Community Practice*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Ha, J. (1999, June 21). Street Vending District Opens on MacArthur Park Sidewalks. *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/1999/jun/21/local/me-48718

Hamilton, N., & Chinchilla, N. S. (2001). Seeking community in a global city: Guatemalans and Salvadorans in Los Angeles. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. Retrieved from http://mirlyn.lib.umich.edu/Record/004183825 CN - F 869 .L89 G824 H36 2001

Harvard Heights. (n.d.). *Office of Historic Resources, Department of City Planning*. Retrieved December 11, 2013, from http://www.preservation.lacity.org/hpoz/la/harvard-heights

Healey, P. (2003). Collaborative Planning in Perspective. *Planning Theory* , *2* (2), 101–123. doi:10.1177/14730952030022002

Heskin, A. D., & Heffner, R. A. (1987). Learning about Bilingual, Multicultural Organizing. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* , *23* (4), 525–541. doi:10.1177/002188638702300406

Hiltzik, M. (2009, December 21). Landlords' pullback puts L.A. Toy District at risk. *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/2009/dec/21/business/la-fi-hiltzik21-2009dec21

Houstoun, L. O. (2003). *BIDs: Business Improvement Districts* (2nd ed.). Washington, D.C.: Urban Land Institute.

Hoyt, L. (2005). Do Business Improvement District Organizations Make a Difference?: Crime In and Around Commercial Areas in Philadelphia. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *25*(2), 185–199. doi:10.1177/0739456X05279276

Hoyt, L., & Gopal-Agge, D. (2007). The Business Improvement District Model: A Balanced Review of Contemporary Debates. *Geography Compass*, *1*(4), 946–958. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8198.2007.00041.x

Hoyt, L. M. (2005). Do Business Improvement District OrganizationsMake a Difference? Crime In and Around Commercial Areas in Philadelphia. *Journal of Planning Education and Research 2005 25: 185*, *25*, 185–199.

Hutchinson, J., & Loukaitou-Sideris, A. (2001). Choosing Confrontation or Consensus in the Inner City: Lessons from a Community-University Partnership. *Planning Theory & Practice*, *2*(3), 293–310. doi:10.1080/14649350120096839

Hutchinson, J. M. (1999). *Propinquity without community: A study of social capital, survival networks and community building in the Pico Union area of Los Angeles*. *ProQuest Dissertations and Theses*. University of California, Los Angeles, Ann Arbor. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/docview/304497570?accountid=14667

Huxley, M. (2000). The Limits to Communicative Planning. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* , *19* (4), 369–377. doi:10.1177/0739456X0001900406

In Memory of Ted Pastras. (n.d.). *Byzantine Latino Quarter Business Improvement District*. Retrieved May 29, 2014, from http://blqbid.org/main/about-us/ted-pastras-page.html

John MacDonald Daniela Golinelli, R. J. S. R. B. (2010). The effect of business improvement districts on the incidence of violent crimes. *Injury Prevention*, *16*, 327–332.

Joseph. (1989, July 14). Immigrants in MacArthur Park. *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/1989-07-14/local/me-3588_1_macarthur-park-park-s-teen-agers-immigrants-from-central-america

Kagan, M. (2012). Why Westlake Won't Gentrify. *Moses Kagan on Real Estate*. Retrieved November 26, 2013, from http://kagansblog.com/2012/02/why-westlake-wont-gentrify/

Kahn, S. (1994). How people get power. Washington, DC: National Association of Social Workers. Retrieved from http://mirlyn.lib.umich.edu/Record/004576783 CN - HN 49 .C6 K34 1994

Karlamangla, S. (2014, January 7). U.S. to designate poor L.A. areas a "Promise Zone," eligible for aid. *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://www.latimes.com/local/la-me-promise-zone-20140108-story.html

Kendall, J. (1989, October 27). 15.7% Increase Recorded in L.A. Murder Rate. *Los Angeles Times*, p. B1.

Kooiman, J. (2003). *Governing as Governance*. London: Sage.

Kotkin, J. (1997, September 28). Can Pico-Union become like N.Y.'s lower east side? *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/1997/sep/28/opinion/op-37054

Kudler, A. G. (2013, November). A Renter's Tale: Watching Gentrifiers Come And Go In Westlake. *Curbed Los Angeles*. Retrieved from http://la.curbed.com/archives/2013/11/a_renters_tale_watching_gentrifiers_come_and_go_in_westlake.php

Levin, R. (2009, February 10). Neighborhoods: Byzantine-Latino Quarter. *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://www.latimes.com/world/europe/la-et-neighborhood10-2009feb10-story.html#axzz2jvttn3tq

Levy, P. R. (2001). Paying for the Public Life. *Economic Development Quarterly*, *15*(2), 124–131. doi:10.1177/089124240101500202

Lewis, N. M. (2010). Grappling with Governance: The Emergence of Business Improvement Districts in a National Capital. *Urban Affairs Review*, *46*(2), 180–217. doi:10.1177/1078087410378844

Los Angeles Administrative Code. , Pub. L. No. Chapter 9, Sections 6.600 through 6.620 (2000). ORDINANCE NO. 173167.

Loukaitou-Sideris, A. (1997). Inner-City Commercial Strips: Decay--Retrofit? *Town Planning Review*, *68*(1), 1–29.

Loukaitou-Sideris, A. (2000). The Byzantine-Latino Quarter: Creating community in Los Angeles' Inner City. *DISP*, *36*(1), 16–22.

Macdonald, J., Bluthenthal, R., Golinelli, D., Kofner, A., Stokes, R., Sehgal, A., & Fain, T. (2009). *Neighborhood effects on crime and youth violence*.

MacDonald, J., Golinelli, D., Stokes, R., & Bluthenthal, R. (2010). The effect of business improvement districts on the incidence of violent crimes. *Injury Prevention*, *16*(5), 327–32. doi:10.1136/ip.2009.024943

Maly, M. T. (2005). *Beyond Segregation: Multiracial and Multiethnic Neighborhoods in The United States*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Massey, D. S., & Denton, N. A. (1993). *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Masters, N. (2013). Westlake (MacArthur) Park: How a Neighborhood Dump Became a Civic Treasure. *Social Focus*. Retrieved November 22, 2013, from http://www.kcet.org/updaily/socal_focus/history/la-as-subject/westlake-macarthur-park-how-a-neighborhood-dump-became-a-civic-treasure.html

Meek, J. W., & Hubler, P. (2008). Chapter 9. Business improvement districts in the Los Angeles metropolitan area: Implications for local governance. In G. Morçöl, L. Hoyt, J. W. Meek, & U. Zimmerman (Eds.), *Business improvement districts: Research, theories, and controversies* (pp. 197–220). Boca Raton, FL: Auerbach.

Meltzer, R. (2012). Understanding Business Improvement District formation: An analysis of neighborhoods and boundaries. *Journal of Urban Economics*, *71*(1), 66–78. Retrieved from http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0094119011000544

Merriam, S. B. (2009). Qualitative Case Study Reseaarch. In *Chapter 3. Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (2nd ed., pp. 39–54). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Minkler, M. (2005). Community organizing and community building for health. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press. Retrieved from http://mirlyn.lib.umich.edu/Record/004913577 CN - RA 427.8 .C641 2005

Mitchell, J. (2001a). Business Improvement Districts and the Management of Innovation. *The American Review of Public Administration*, *31*(2), 201–217. doi:10.1177/02750740122064929

Mitchell, J. (2001b). Business Improvement Districts and the New Revitalization of Downtown. *Economic Development Quarterly*, *15*(2), 115–123. doi:10.1177/089124240101500201

Mitchell, J. (2008). *Business Improvement Districts and the Shape of American Cities*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Morçöl, G., Hoyt, L., Meek, J. W., & Zimmerman, U. (Eds.). (2008). *Business Improvement Districts: Research, Theories, and Controversies*. CRC Press.

Morris, A. D. (1984). The origins of the civil rights movement: Black communities organizing for change. New York : London: Free Press ; Collier Macmillan. Retrieved from http://mirlyn.lib.umich.edu/Record/004397916 CN - E185.61 .M845 1984

Murray, M. J. (2011). Chapter7. Entrepreneurial urbanism and the private city. In *City of Extremes: The Spatial Politics of Johannesburg*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Musso, J. (2012). Neighborhood Councils. In D. C. Sloane (Ed.), *Planning Los Angeles* (pp. 53–61). Chicago | Washington, D.C.: American Planning Association Planners Press.

Nyden, P., Lukehart, J., Maly, M. T., & Peterman, W. (1998). Chapter 1 : Neighborhood Racial and Ethnic Diversity in U . S . Cities, *4*(2), 1–17.

O'Connor, A. (1999). Swimming again the Tide. In R. F. Ferguson & W. T. Dickens (Eds.), *Urban Problems and Community Development1* (pp. 77–137). Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution.

Ochoa, E., & Ochoa, G. L. (2005). Latino Los Angeles: Transformations, Communities, and Activism. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. Retrieved from http://mirlyn.lib.umich.edu/Record/005116172 CN - F 869 .L89 S75 L37 2005

Office of the Mayor. (2013). Mayor's Proposed Budgets. *City Administrative Officer Webpage*. Retrieved March 03, 2014, from http://cao.lacity.org/budget/

Olson, M. (1971). *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Osborne, D., & Gaebler, T. (1992). *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transformin the Public Sector*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc.

Pack, J. R. (1992). BIDs, DIDs, SIDs, SADs: Private governments in Urban America. *The Brookings Review*, *10*(4), 18–21.

Parker, G., & Poe, C. (2006). *World's Most Dangerous Gang*. USA: National Geographic Explorer.

Past Presidents of Pico Union Neighborhood Council. (n.d.). *Pico Union Neighborhood Council*. Retrieved May 29, 2014, from http://www.picounionnc.org/node/27

Peterman, W. (2000). *Neighborhood Planning and Community-Based Development: The Potential and Limits of Grassroots Action*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Pico-Union. (n.d.). *Office of Historic Resources, Department of City Planning*. Los Angeles. Retrieved from http://preservation.lacity.org/hpoz/la/pico-union

Pool, B. (1990, September 18). Mixed Ambience: Victorian Bed-and-Breakfast Stands Out Amid City Squalor. *The Los Angeles Times*, p. B1.

Promise Zones. (2014). *The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development*. Retrieved May 25, 2014, from https://www.onecpd.info/promise-zones

Purdum, T. S. (1999, June 10). Los Angeles Reinvents Itself, Adopting New City Charter. *The New York Tmes*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/1999/06/10/us/los-angeles-reinvents-itself-adopting-new-city-charter.html

Qadeer, M. (1997). Pluralistic planning for multicultural cities: The Canadian Practice. *Journal of American Planning Association*, *63*(4), 481–494.

Ramirez, M. (1999, June 5). Teamed Up to Clean Up. *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/1999/jun/05/local/me-44364

Reisch, M., & Wenocur, S. (1986). The Future of Community Organization in Social Work: Social Activism and the Politics of Profession Building. *Social Service Review*, *60*(1), 70–93. doi:10.2307/30011835

Rivera, F. G., & Erlich, J. L. (Eds.). (1998). *Community Organizing in a Diverse Society* (3rd ed.). Needhan Heights: Allyn & Bacon.

Saillant, C., & Linthicum, K. (2013, November 6). L.A. council members push to end street-vending ban. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/2013/nov/06/local/la-me-ln-end-street-vending-ban-20131106

Sandoval, G. (2010). *Immigrants and the Revitalization of Los Angeles: Development and Change in MacArthur Park*. Amherst, New York: Cambria Press.

Savas, E. (1987). *Privatization: The Key to Better Government*. Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House Publishers.

Schneider, J. (2008). Escape From Los Angeles: White Flight from Los Angeles and Its Schools, 1960-1980 . *Journal of Urban History* , *34* (6), 995–1012. doi:10.1177/0096144208317600

Sears, D. O., & Citrin, J. (1982). Chapter 2. The History of the California Tax Revolt. In *Tax Revolt: Something for Nothing in California* (pp. 19–42). Harvard University Press.

Shaw, T. C. (2009). *Now Is the Time!: Detroit Black Politics and Grassroots Activism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Small, M. L., & Newman, K. (2001). Urban Poverty after The Truly Disadvantaged: The Rediscovery of the Family, the Neighborhood, and Culture. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *27*, 23–45. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/2678613

Smock, K. (2004). *Democracy in Action: Community Organizing and Urban Change*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Sonenshein, R. J. (2004). *The City at Stake: Secession, Reform, and Battle for Los Angeles*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Sonenshein, R. J. (2006). *Los Angeles: Structure of a City Government*. THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LOS ANGELES.

St John, E. (Ed.). (1986). *Los Angeles: Structure of a City*. League of Women Voters of Los Angeles.

Starting a Business Improvement District: A step-by-step guide. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/downloads/pdf/bid_guide_complete.pdf

Steel, M., & Symes, M. (2005). The Privatisation of Public Space? The American Experience of Business Improvement Districts and their Relationship to Local Governance. *Local Government Studies*, *31*(3), 321–334. doi:10.1080/03003930500095152

Stodghill, R., & Bower, A. (2002). Welcome to America's Most Diverse City. *Time Magazine*.

Stoker, G. (1998). Governance as theory: five propositions. *International Social Science Journal*, *50*(155), 17–28. doi:10.1111/1468-2451.00106

Storper, M. (2013). *The Rise and Fall of Urban Economies: Divergent Development in Los Angeles and San Francisco since 1970*.

Stoutland, S. E. (1999). Community Development Corporations: Mission, Strategy, and Accomplishments. In R. F. Ferguson & W. T. Dickens (Eds.), *Urban Problems and Community Development* (pp. 193–240). Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution.

Taylor, M. (2007). Community Participation in the Real World: Opportunities and Pitfalls in New Governance Spaces. *Urban Studies* , *44* (2), 297–317. doi:10.1080/00420980601074987

Tiebout, C. M. (1956). A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures. *Journal of Political Economy*, *64*(5), 416–424.

Twelvetrees, A. (1989). *Organizing for Neighbourhood Development: A Comparative Study of Community Development Corporations and Citizen Power Organizations*. Avebury.

U. S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). *Social and Economic Characteristics: Los Angeles County, CA*.

U.S. Businesses. (2014). *ReferenceUSA*. Retrieved from http://www.referenceusa.com/

Vigil, J. D. (2002). Chapter 9. Salvadorans in Los Angeles : the Pico-Union area. In *A rainbow of gangs : street cultures in the mega-city* (pp. 131–145). Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press.

Vitiello, D. (2009). The Migrant Metropolis and American Planning. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, *75*(2), 245–255. doi:10.1080/01944360902724496

Wacquant, L. J. D., & Wilson, W. J. (1989). The Cost of Racial and Class Exclusion in the Inner City. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *501*(1), 8–25. doi:10.1177/0002716289501001001

Watanabe, T. (2002, September 21). Greek Orthodox Cathedral Is Reaching Beyond Ethnic Roots. *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/2002/sep/21/local/me-religsophia21

Watanabe, T. (2009, March 22). Pico-Union tour traces historical immigration patterns. *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/2009/mar/22/local/me-pico22

Weidner, R. R. (2001). *I Won't Do Manhattan: Causes and Consequences of a Decline in Street Prostitution*. New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing.

Wilson, W. J. (1987). *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Wilson, W. J. (1996). *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor*. New York: Knopf.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. SAGE Publications, Inc.

Zavis, A. (2012, July 9). Los Angeles skid row cleanup nets nearly 5 tons of refuse. *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jul/09/local/la-me-skid-row-sweep-20120710